GARY BASS: HOW MUCH JUSTICE IN BOSNIA?

MARTIN PERETZ ON ERIC BREINDEL

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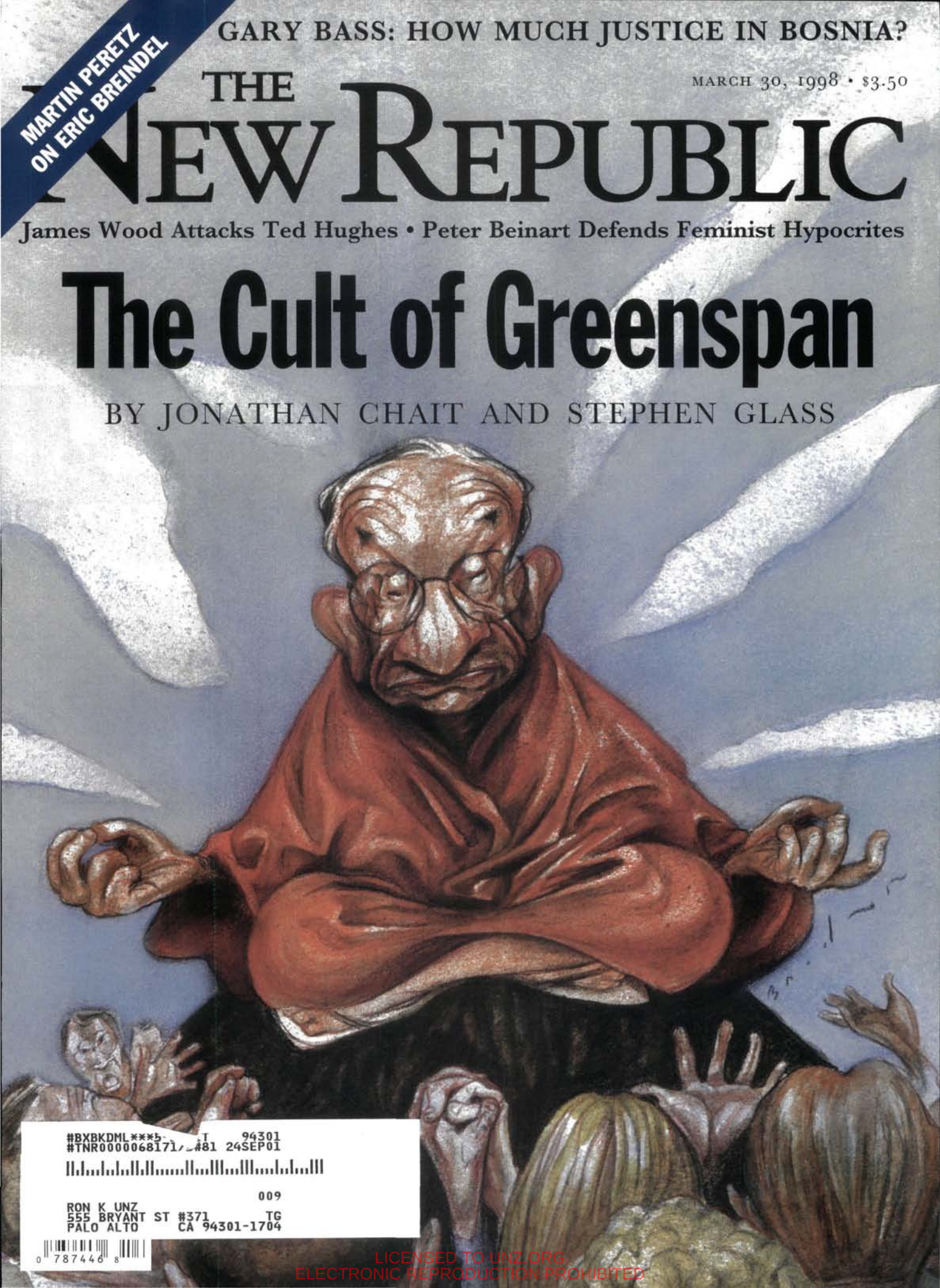
James Wood Attacks Ted Hughes • Peter Beinart Defends Feminist Hypocrites

The Cult of Greenspan

BY JONATHAN CHAIT AND STEPHEN GLASS



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MARCH 30, 1998

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CORRESPONDENCE

Pound foolish

To the editors:

Jonathan Chait writes that the administration's plan to set aside unified budget surpluses of $1.1 trillion over the next ten years will help close the actuarial gap that the Social Security system faces in the long run ("Penny Wise," February 23).

But the surplus will not finance the system on its own in the future. Resolving Social Security's long-term problem requires a set aside over the next ten years of $2.6 trillion, consisting of the system's projected $1.5 trillion surplus plus an additional one percent of gross domestic product. Under these circumstances, it is unlikely that it will be possible to avoid raising payroll taxes and cutting retirement benefits in the effort to save Social Security.

STERIE T. BEZA
Great Falls, Virginia

To the editors:

Jonathan Chait wants us to believe that Social Security can be saved by exchanging public debt for intragovernmental debt: paying down the national debt with projected budget surpluses and crediting these payments to the Social Security trust fund, an innovative—and sneakily progressive—use of smoke and mirrors accounting.

One possible solution to the Social Security budget-surplus paradox is to reduce benefits to future retirees and to supplement the benefits of the lower income retirees with an expanded Supplementary Security Income program. This would eliminate the need for substantial increases in regressive payroll taxes and would finance benefits for the lower-income elderly through progressive taxes.

And that's just one of many other policy prescriptions that, though not perfect, would allow Social Security to continue without major increases in payroll taxes or draconian cuts in benefits. As for the projected surpluses, they can be used for increased funding of some programs, tax reductions, and some reduction in outstanding debt. Tying Social Security reform to the budget surpluses through the buildup of Treasury IOUs is not sound policy.

ELLIOTT J. DUBIN
Springfield, Virginia

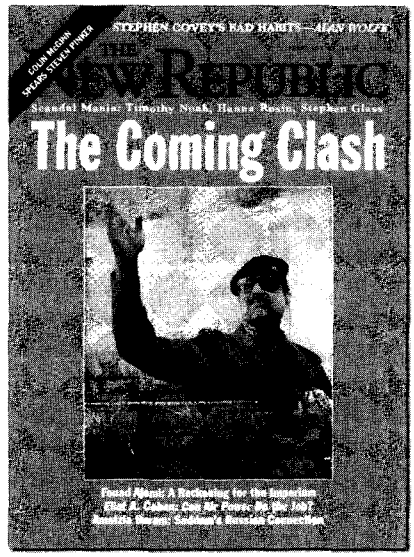
Jonathan Chait replies:

I never claimed the budget surpluses would save Social Security. In fact, I specifically wrote, "this would not obviate the need for additional reform at some point down the road; crediting the entire projected surplus to the trust fund would at best wipe out only a quarter of Social Security's actuarial future deficit."

Neurotic tendencies

To the editors:

Maggie Scarf's psychological ruminations ("Facing Facts," February 23) make little sense. The person who maintains a healthy diet, exercises, and yet continues to smoke is living in contradiction *only if* he adopts the attitude, "My goal is to live a healthy life." The behavior by itself doesn't illustrate anything, let alone "cognitive dissonance." He may simply enjoy eating well, exercising, *and* smoking. Further, I should think that someone who ardently seeks to resolve *genuine* inconsistencies within himself is probably a great deal more neurotic than one who doesn't.



Contradiction and ambiguity are inherent features of the world. Thus, it's no surprise that the polling data, with respect to Clinton's job performance and sexual romps, reveal such disparity. Christopher Bollas's theory, which states that President Clinton "was elected not in spite of his rambunctious sexuality; he was elected *because of it*," is outright bull. Clinton was elected at the very least because he positioned himself politically in the center as a moderate liberal (or, some might say, a moderate conservative).

ALEXANDER H. LIPPINCOTT
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Maggie Scarf replies:

Mr. Lippincott is surely right in his assertion that the three behaviors mentioned could be simply unrelated choices, made on the basis of personal enjoyment only. But people usually tend to exhibit clusters of behavior which are conjoined, purposeful, and reflect a basic life attitude—in the example given, "I want to live a healthy life." What seems so remarkable in the Clinton instance is the public's ability to live with the unresolved contradictions and ambiguities—we're *not* being neurotic or rushing to judgment at all. As for Bollas's theory, it's just that—a highly speculative theory—but one which I find quite entrancing and original.

Covey story

To the editors:

Alan Wolfe's critique of the work of Stephen Covey ("White Magic in America," February 23) is true to the Covey principle of "begin[ning] with the end in mind." That end, as seen in the final paragraph of Wolfe's article, is to brand Joseph Smith a fraud and Mormonism, the religion he founded, a sham. Whatever their similarities of doctrine or habit, Covey and Smith were different in a key respect: Smith claimed to have received prophetic power from God, a claim honored by ten million followers today. Challenging Smith's assertion—and by implication the Mormon creed—is a serious thing. It ought to be undertaken as a distinct critical enterprise, not advertised with an obfuscatory billing and treated with a less-weighty subject. Wolfe's use of Smith and Covey as mutual foils creates a kind of oscillating shell game, in which charges against one are substantiated by charges against the other. If Mormonism is to be critiqued in your forum, let it be done under its own heading, by one who has performed primary research into the beliefs and practices of the Mormon people, with logic laid bare for critical rejoinder.

HENRY J. EYRING
North Salt Lake, Utah

To the editors:

One concludes from Alan Wolfe's review of Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families* that Professor Wolfe very strongly dislikes the book. What intrigues me is that Professor Wolfe has used the odd context of a review of an innocuous self-improvement book to launch a full-front assault on the ethos and theology of Mormonism.

There is no question that Mormonism's cosmology is more optimistic

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than those of many other creeds. One could even describe it as "win-win." It sees God's purpose in creation as that of expanding the community of those who share his divinity; one loses only by refusing the wisdom God offers. So on what grounds does Wolfe judge that those who are religious should prefer a condemnatory "win-lose" God to a benevolent "win-win" Heavenly Father? Such a worldview does not ignore life's hard truths.

Ridiculed, beaten, falsely imprisoned, nearly executed, and attacked and ultimately murdered by a lynch mob, Joseph Smith came to an intense personal understanding of man's capacity for evil. His cosmology of hope was gained at great cost. Further, his work contains a significant body of economic, political, and social criticism of which Wolfe would not be aware because it is ignored in most secondary sources. Those of us who study Smith through primary sources find there ample substance to empower the life judgments invoked by a faith in which the exercise of moral free will is central.

I may misperceive Wolfe's criticism as elitist disdain for the religions and aspirations of the lower classes. Perhaps he only lacks primary exposure to the lived life of Mormonism, exposure which one cannot acquire from John Brooke, Fawn Brodie, or, for that matter, Stephen Covey books written for a general audience. If that is the case, I would advise him to pursue such a primary investigation.

JAMES W. LUCAS
New York, New York

To the editors:

Cheers for Alan Wolfe and his unsparing analysis of Stephen Covey's *7 Habits*. One hopes that Wolfe's piece may save naïve families from creating "mission statements" and holding endless seminars on "win-win" as substitutions for good sense. Alas, it is too late for many of us whose working lives were blighted by all that gibberish when it swept corporate America during the mid-1990s.

As Wolfe points out, "Following the Seven Habits ... produces obedient automatons." Little wonder, then, that senior managers seized on Covey's doctrine as the means to shape up their troops, often before they shipped them out.

Meanwhile, just as we were obsessively implementing the seven habits and rearranging the plinths and columns of the whole system, management hit upon the merger. Once found, the merger washed away all before it and copies of Covey's book became doorstops, a state of intrinsic usefulness they had hitherto not achieved.

Some of us were not amazed at how easily we kicked the habits.

ROBERT LARUE
Lincoln, New Mexico

Forgive and take

To the editors:

Hanna Rosin sees black support for Clinton in the wake of his "political wavering" and Monica Lewinsky's accusations as based largely upon the president's embracing many of the top priorities of the Congressional Black Congress ("Support Group," February 23). The possibility that, according to a *Washington Post* poll, "over 85 percent of African Americans approve of Clinton and think he has the honesty and integrity to do his job" cannot, she implies, be explained by John Lewis's compassionate view, "where [Clinton] is forgiven though never pronounced guilty." Rosin adds, "Lewis's style of absolution is a dying art ... a nostalgia over shanty churches." This, of course, is to say that the teachings of Jesus Christ are a dying art, an assertion that even a *Washington Post* poll would probably contradict.

OREN MCCLEARY
Charlestown, Massachusetts

Good spirits

To the editors:

In "Legal Limits" (February 23), Glenn C. Loury issues a wake-up call all Christians should hearken to: "Churches should, first and foremost, be about spirituality." In my local Episcopal Church, it is not unusual to hear a Sunday sermon cloaking the latest political fad in religious terms rather than a theology that, from a higher spiritual perspective, creatively criticizes all simplistic political answers to life's complex problems, and turns worshipers to personal reflection and social participation.

Reading church history convinces me that when the lion of state lies down with the lamb of religion, the lion has dinner.

DOUGLAS H. SCHEWE
Madison, Wisconsin

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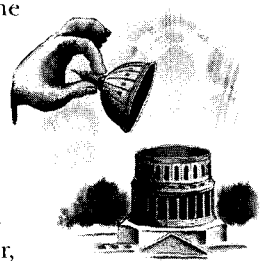
FROM WASHINGTON

Admit it

Puerto Rico will not become the fifty-first state—at least not soon. On March 4, House Speaker Newt Gingrich arranged a vote on a Republican-sponsored bill to authorize a binding island-wide referendum on Puerto Rico's political status this year. The bill says that, if a majority votes for statehood, a transition period as long as ten years would begin, culminating in Puerto Rican statehood early next century. The measure passed, but only by 209 to 208—a vote so close, and so rancorous, that Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott decided to shelve the issue.

Still, it is bound to come up again, if only because leaders of both parties seem to feel—correctly or not—that offering Puerto Rico statehood is a way to court Latino voters. Sooner or later, Congress, and the Puerto Ricans themselves, will have to decide: Should what is now an autonomous "commonwealth" become a full-fledged state?

One way to answer that question is to ask another one: What would Puerto Rican statehood really change? Economically, not much. Opponents point to widespread poverty and welfare dependence among the island's 3.8 million inhabitants, who are U.S. citizens and are therefore eligible for food stamps and the like. Critics note that, for complicated legal reasons, Puerto Rico's poor would be entitled to even more under statehood. However, this would be offset by an increase in tax revenues; under the commonwealth arrangement, Puerto Ricans don't pay federal income tax. On balance, the General Accounting Office says, statehood would cost the U.S. $3 billion or $4 billion per year, hardly enough to bust the giant federal budget.



In one important political sense, too, statehood would be less of a departure than is commonly supposed. Statehood proponents make much of the fact that commonwealth status denies Puerto Ricans the right to vote for president and members of Congress. But, *as an individual*, no Puerto Rican is denied that right. As citizens, Puerto Ricans can move to the mainland and instantly become eligible to vote in all elections. This is one reason there are so many Latino voters for Republicans and Democrats to court by offering statehood to Puerto Rico!

Statehood would result in only two major changes. The first is that it would create six new seats in the House of Representatives and two new seats in the Senate. In the recent debate, some Republicans fretted about creating so much new legislative power for liberal Puerto Rican Democrats, who would presumably use their clout to advocate ever-expanding welfare benefits for the folks back home—and for minorities on the mainland.

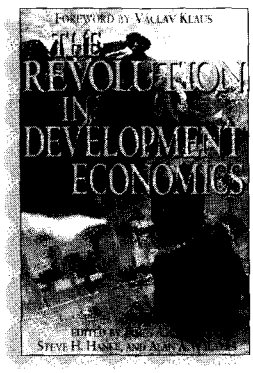
But would they really? Puerto Rico has a highly developed political culture, with a vigorous two-party system and a strong strain of social conservatism. Although the commonwealth currently has strict gun-registration laws, it also permits school prayer and provided government vouchers for kids to attend private school. Anyway, safe liberal Puerto Rican Democratic House districts already exist—on the mainland. Representative Nydia Velazquez—a liberal Democrat who *opposed* the statehood bill—owes her seat to the creation of a majority-Latino congressional district in New York City in 1992 (a bit of racial gerrymandering, by the way, that was approved by the Bush administration's civil rights division).

The second major change statehood would bring about is the creation of America's first non-English-speaking state. Proponents tend not to emphasize the disquieting fact that three-quarters of Puerto Ricans speak only Spanish, but there is no denying it. To some degree, Puerto Rico would indeed be "another Quebec"—a "distinct society" whose claims for official recognition of its language could lay the basis for wider efforts to make America, like Canada, a bilingual country. Thus, unlike past admissions of such formerly Spanish but sparsely settled territories as New Mexico and California, admitting Puerto Rico as a state would raise basic questions about the essence of the American nation. Is it a cultural community defined by a common language and historical experience? Or is it a political community defined by adherence to a "civil religion" of individual freedom and equality before the law?

continued on page 41

"This book celebrates the achievement of Peter Bauer, whose ideas have been vindicated by a half century of history."

—James M. Buchanan, Nobel laureate in economics



The collapse of communism and the statist model of development planning has led to a revolution in development economic theory. There is a new focus on, and appreciation for, the important roles that market institutions and cultural factors play in shaping economic performance, as well as the importance of private property, a concept first promoted by a pioneer in this field, Lord Peter Bauer. Other contributors to this book include Karl Brunner, Deepak Lal, Julian Simon, Alan Rufus Waters, Paul Craig Roberts, Sir Alan A. Walters, and Alvin Rabushka.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MARCH 30, 1998

INDEFENSIBLE COUNSEL

It has taken nearly four years and $30 million, but Kenneth Starr has finally proven his case: the independent counsel law should be abandoned. The 1978 statute, which calls for an independent body to investigate alleged wrongdoing by the president and members of his administration, was designed in the wake of Watergate to insulate the law from politics. But, like so many well-intentioned reforms, it has done just the opposite. It has pushed the law deeper and more dangerously into the realm of politics—as well as into the private lives of both public officials and ordinary citizens. It has turned serious matters of state into trivial matters of sex, peccadilloes into high crimes and misdemeanors.

What is so telling about Starr's unintended case against the independent counsel law is that, contrary to the White House's hyperspin, he is not a maniacal Republican, or even, by nature, an overzealous prosecutor. At worst, he is a bungler, an Inspector Clouseau rather than an Inspector Javert—an appellate lawyer and judge with little prosecutorial experience who seems congenitally incapable of making even minor decisions, as even some people close to his investigation privately concede.

But he is also, by all accounts, an honorable man, someone who only a few years ago was considered a plausible candidate for a seat on the United States Supreme Court, a judge who spent most of his career in the refined, refracted light of jurisprudence making clear to others what has become so blurred to him: the proper boundaries of the law. Back then, even Democrats were trumpeting his virtues. During Starr's 1989 nomination hearings for U.S. solicitor general, Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware—who has since joined the anti-Starr stampede—touted his "independence," "sound legal judgment," and "due respect for the high court."

No, Starr's transgressions are more complicated, and thus more revealing and disturbing. For they are rooted in a system rather than a man, in an independent counsel law that places virtually no limits on the individuals it empowers. Whereas ordinary prosecutors must juggle multiple cases and thus prioritize them, independent counsels have only one case and all the time and money they want to pursue it. Since 1990, eight independent counsels have spent a total of more than $80 million; one probe, begun nearly eight years ago to investigate malfeasance in the Reagan administration's Department of Housing and Urban Development, is still going on today. The statute "has anointed kings," former New Hampshire Senator Warren Rudman once noted, "in a land that doesn't believe in kings."

Starr, in a sense, was the ultimate test case: if anyone seemed able to resist the imperial temptations of the all-encompassing statute, it was he. And, indeed, Starr began his case in a limited and worthy capacity, as the investigator of the byzantine land deals of Whitewater. Unlike other independent counsels, he often seemed more interested in his prior clients than in nailing his primary target, Bill Clinton. In April 1996, he even took time out from Whitewater to argue before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of tobacco firms. Yet his investigation expanded nonetheless. Indeed, because the statute forced him to look into every allegation—any rumor or slur or hypothesis—that might arise out of the initial inquiry, he became a kind of legal acrobat, hopscotching from Whitewater to Travelgate to Filegate.

Still, Starr seemed anything but a rogue. When he released his report on the Vince Foster suicide, he went out of his way to quash rumors, fueled by (yes!) right-wing conspiracy theorists, that the deputy White House counsel had been murdered. And, after nearly three years and a handful of convictions against obscure Whitewater figures in Arkansas, he planned to do what few of his predecessors had done: walk away. His decision to abdicate his throne for a teaching post at Pepperdine University in California—tacitly admitting that his investigation had reached the end of the line—was not irresponsible, as his critics, including the decidedly unrightist *New York Times* editorial page, claimed. It was, rather, a rare recognition that prosecutions, and prosecutors, should not be permanent fixtures on the political landscape. The public outcry that followed Starr's decision, prompting him to abruptly reverse course and even to

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apologize, underscored again the perverse incentives of the independent counsel law: an independent counsel cannot walk away. As the costs of each investigation spiral, the pressure inevitably mounts to convict, to find something, anything, on the target. And so it has come to this: locking up the hapless Susan McDougal for 18 months for refusing to provide information (which may or may not have proven incriminating) on the president, subpoenaing White House spinmeister Sid Blumenthal for talking to reporters, and searching for semen stains on a young woman's clothing.

So the case is closed. No one, not even a good man, can rescue a bad law. When the independent counsel statute comes up for reauthorization in Congress next year, it should be allowed to expire. There is talk about merely tinkering with it, but that has been tried before and proven futile. In the political system, there is already an institutional method of oversight and punishment: elections, congressional hearings, even impeachment proceedings. Notwithstanding the fears of returning to the old constitutional order—under which the Justice Department and Congress ferreted out alleged wrongdoing by senior elected officials—the fact is that this system worked well enough for more than two centuries. Indeed, it even prevailed in the hardest of cases—President Nixon was, in the end, forced to resign in the face of impeachment. So even Starr can take heart: If his bungling ultimately returns us to the old, more dignified system, his legacy as independent counsel may not have been entirely pernicious after all. •

NOTEBOOK

THE NEXT WAR: Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian nationalist president of Yugoslavia, has launched a new war in Kosovo province. The United States must try to stop it, but this is not Bosnia redux; the situation is more complicated, politically and morally, and, therefore, more intractable. There is no cross-border aggression (Kosovo has never been recognized as anything but a province of Serbia) or manufactured enmity. In Kosovo, ethnic hatreds really do go back centuries. The Albanians there demand independence based on the fact that the 180,000 Serb residents are interlopers from other regions of Yugoslavia, outnumbered ten to one by Albanians. Serbs consider Kosovo, scene of an ancient battle against the Ottoman Turks, a sacred territory over which all Serbs, even those who oppose Milosevic, wish to preserve as Serbian sovereignty. Still, until the Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army murdered six Serbian policemen, albeit in response to Serbian arrests and beatings, the province had managed to preserve an uneasy peace. This was largely thanks to the impressive Albanian leader, Ibrahim Rugova, who had insisted on a policy of nonviolent resistance to Serbian abuses. The Clinton administration is desperate to avoid a spreading of the conflict into Macedonia, home to 420,000 Albanians, or into Albania itself. The best hope for achieving this may be to convince Albanians to reembrace Rugova's strategy. President Clinton's special representative Robert Gelbard has told both sides to exercise restraint and that the U.S. does not support an Albanian state in Kosovo. But the main focus of U.S. pressure will, out of necessity, be Belgrade. If the Serbs continue to attack Albanian villages as indiscriminately as they have recently, the cries for vengeance on the Albanian side will become irresistible, and the conflict will spiral beyond anyone's capacity to contain it.

BROCK CROCK: Sometimes, when you're a demi-celebrity and your little star begins to fade, the only way to rekindle it is to issue a mea culpa. Call it the George Wallace strategy: a choreographed apology, a dash of all-American redemption, and presto! You're in the news again. Could this be what right-wing journalist David Brock has in mind? In the April issue of *Esquire*, Brock, author of the "Troopergate" article that first appeared in *The American Spectator* and that unleashed both the Paula Jones harassment suit and the Monica Lewinsky scandal, apologizes for his original story. What's not clear—because Brock has been too busy with self-important musings about his own motivations to make it clear—is whether he is retracting it. In an interview with *The Washington Post*'s Howard Kurtz, Brock, who has been drifting away from his conservative pals ever since his oddly fulsome biography of Hillary Clinton appeared in 1996, struck an ambiguous note. "I'm not saying they made the whole thing up," he said of the troopers who alleged they arranged sexual trysts for the president. "I do think there was probably room for them to exaggerate." (The *Los Angeles Times*, which reported similar stories, has not seen fit to recant. But that respected paper is not busy with its next attention-getting career move.) In *Esquire*, meanwhile, Brock's open "letter to the president" concedes that, along with various right-wing activists, he "conspired to damage" Clinton and his presidency. "There was an open political agenda at work.... I did regard you, the first Democratic president in my adult life, as an ideological threat." An ideological threat? To a twentysomething gadfly on the make? Of course, Brock's real feat is to generate a buzz around repentance without repenting. "I didn't go searching for the story. It found me," he writes. Sure. And Brock's latest article was motivated by the public good—not any interest in, say, a fat check from *Esquire*.

WHOM CAN YOU TRUST?:

Trust in Government Edges Up

—*The Washington Post*, March 10

Americans Take a Dim View Of the Government, Survey Finds

—*The New York Times*, same day •

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The right's newfound feminism.

HYPOCRITICS

By Peter Beinart

"The feminists stand exposed as a partisan pressure group, which is not what they said they were. They said they were a universal moral movement acting on behalf of all women. They claimed, very loudly, that harassment was an outrage and a horror. But, as it turns out, they are for women selectively, and against harassment only now and then. It was never a principle—merely a hammer, a tool used to bludgeon political enemies." How many times, since Monica entered your life, have you read some variant of this? The particular specimen quoted above comes from a March 9 cover story in *The Weekly Standard* by Noemie Emery—but there is hardly a conservative pundit alive who has not said the same thing over the past two months. By the time Emery took her whack, the *Standard* had, by my count, already made the point in three separate articles—each more outraged at feminist hypocrisy than the last.

Conservatives should take a moment from stone throwing to contemplate the vitrescence of their own house. Feminist indifference to the Clinton sex scandals does constitute hypocrisy, but so does slamming feminists for abandoning their extravagant view of sexual harassment while simultaneously exploiting that view. In article after article designed to show that feminists have sacrificed the principles they articulated during the Anita Hill and Bob Packwood cases, conservatives end up adopting the very feminist assumptions about sexual harassment they've long opposed.

For years, the right has attacked the feminists for eroding the distinction between consensual and nonconsensual sex. Yet, in their desire to equate the Lewinsky affair with Hill and Packwood, conservatives do the same thing. Thus, the *Standard's* Matthew Rees writes that Democratic Representative Nita Lowey "made no secret of her sympathy for Anita Hill. But now that a Democratic president is under scrutiny, her rules have changed." But, if unwanted advances are fundamentally different from consensual sex, there is no contradiction in Lowey's being outraged over Anita and blasé about Monica. Whatever their motivations, feminists have been scrupulous about saying that what Monica and Bill allegedly did was not sexual harassment, because she wanted it. In essence, they've adopted the principle the right used to espouse. Meanwhile, conservative columnist Linda Chavez is, with a straight face, calling Clinton-Lewinsky "the most important sexual harassment case in U.S. history."

Related to the feminist sin of confusing consensual and nonconsensual sex is the feminist sin of portraying women as sexual victims. And yet, in the Alice in Wonderland world of the past two months, it is Chavez who calls Lewinsky "a victim." Conservative *Time* columnist Andrew Ferguson writes that, in the Lewinsky case, "the radical-feminist critique of sex as purely a matter of power and exploitation ... seems not so radical." In the days of yore, George Will mocked Anita Hill for lecturing about "the powerlessness of women," but today it is Gloria Steinem who says that a 21-year-old woman can "say yes or no" and Republican Representative Anne Northup who twice called Lewinsky "powerless" on a recent edition of "Meet the Press." If one side is elevating partisanship above principle, so is the other.

To be fair, some conservatives base their feminist-hypocrisy charge not on Lewinsky but on Paula Jones. But the problem remains the same. While what happened to Jones may or may not have been sexual harassment, it certainly wasn't sexual harassment according to the right's definition.

Noemie Emery, in her *Standard* article, attacks the idea that "the *pass*, not the punishment" constitutes sexual harassment, and blames feminists for propagating it. In a passionate defense of Bob Packwood four years ago, William Safire made the same point, noting, "He is not accused of threatening to block careers, the essence of what we now prohibit as sexual harassment; on the contrary, Mr. Packwood hired and advanced qualified women when equal opportunity was denied elsewhere in the male-dominated Senate."

But, if *punishment* is the standard, the Jones case is a laugher. Jones's supervisors have denied that Clinton or people connected to him ever told them to retaliate against Jones for spurning his alleged proposition. And Jones was given raises totaling 25 percent of her salary during her two years at the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission. The punishment part of the Jones suit is so weak that one of her lawyers told *The Washington Post* last month that it's not integral to their case.

The same goes for Kathleen Willey, the other woman who allegedly rejected Clinton's amorous advances. She not only got a job in the White House counsel's office (she had been a volunteer), but Clinton appointed her to the board of governors of the United Service Organization. During the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas showdown, conservatives undermined Hill's charges by noting that she profited from her relationship with Thomas—she moved with him from the Department of Education to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and phoned him for favors and advice once she entered academia. The same goes for Jones and Willey—their run-ins with Clinton did not hurt their careers. Jones, according to a friend's testimony, even spoke warmly of Clinton after the purported "kiss it" incident and sought him out. If feminists are hypocritical for not rallying to Jones's and

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Willey's defense when there is evidence that Clinton made a pass at them, why aren't conservatives hypocritical for not rallying to the president's defense when there is no evidence that he punished either woman for resisting?

A few conservatives believe that if Clinton made a pass at, or had sex with, an employee, he should leave office—not because of sexual harassment, but because adultery is immoral. That's a principled position as long as it applies to all politicians—for instance, Bob Packwood. But most conservatives do not believe that. Like other Americans, they think that what matters in the various Clinton sex scandals is whether the president lied under oath about Lewinsky and whether he told her to lie.

But, according to conservative principles, Clinton and Lewinsky should never have found themselves testifying under oath about their alleged affair. First, Jones should not have brought her sexual harassment suit because she wasn't sexually harassed. Second, since conservatives usually defend presidential privilege, the Supreme Court should not have ruled that Jones's suit could go forward while Clinton was in office. Third, since conservatives generally dislike the Independent Counsel Act, they should have opposed Kenneth Starr's probe into Lewinsky.

In the same breath in which they attack Clinton for lying under oath, conservatives should be attacking the circumstances that put him in the position to do so. Most, of course, have not. Instead, finding that the legal and sexual norms they oppose are suddenly working in their favor, they have milked them for all they're worth. This does not necessarily make conservatives worse than everyone else in Washington. But then it doesn't put them in the best position to lecture about hypocrisy, either. •

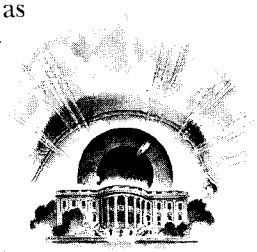
WHITE HOUSE WATCH

MINING MONICA

By Hanna Rosin

Most of the phone calls were subtle, friendly—of the "Gee, haven't seen you in a while," or the "Remember that last time we played poker and you bluffed like a champ?" variety. Few were so blunt as to ask outright for a piece of the action; still, the lawyers on the White House team knew what their colleagues were really calling about. When a scandal breaks and you're at the center of it, everyone's your long-lost friend. And virtually every member of Washington's very insular white-collar criminal defense fraternity is looking for some lawyerless client, some witness in distress, who will be his ticket into the game. "We had one guy who sent us his resume, references, even an eight-by-ten glossy photo of himself," recalls an assistant to one of the lawyers involved in the independent counsel investigation. "He sent a note wishing happy birthday to [one of the lawyers]. But no one around here had ever even heard of the guy."

The legal drama surrounding the various Clinton scandals has been told mostly as tragedy, as a tale of dutiful civil servants getting tangled up in the lawsuits and being forced to mortgage their homes to pay their attorneys' fees. The poster girl for this sob story is Maggie Williams, Hillary Clinton's former chief of staff who accumulated $350,000 in legal bills. But there is a sunnier side to this story, to be found at the receiving end of those $350,000 retainers. For every terrified witness there is a defense attorney with a renewed sense of purpose and a rapidly swelling bank account. With a prosecutor like Ken Starr, who subpoenas everyone from Vernon Jordan's chauffeur to a White House steward, there are a lot of needy clients out there. The trick is getting the right Rolodex to open up at your name.



Here's how it works: A civil servant, let's say Betty Currie, gets a subpoena. In keeping with the White House's "joint defense" strategy, Bob Bennett, the president's private lawyer, will draw up a list of suggested lawyers and turn it over to White House counsel Charles Ruff, who will then present the list to Currie. Winning a coveted spot on that short list requires "sort of reminding us that you're around" without being too indiscreet, says the assistant. "You don't want to be the one placing the call," says Charles Ogletree, the Harvard Law School professor who represents Francis Carter, the lawyer who used to represent Monica Lewinsky. "You want your phone to ring first."

Once the phone rings, you have a second decision to make. "Quite frankly, what some of us do is sit out and wait to see who's going to be subpoenaed before we commit to a client," says Stanley Brand, a lawyer who bagged a big one: George Stephanopoulos. "You don't want to be taken out of play by someone who is not a central figure.... Although," Brand adds prudently, "the bird-in-the-hand theory does cross your mind."

Plato Cacheris had no choice but to grab that bird in hand. A former law colleague and old friend of Bennett's, Cacheris once represented star clients such as Fawn Hall and Aldrich Ames. Recently, according to a report in *Newsweek*, Bennett suggested to Cacheris that he assist Kathleen Willey's regular attorney, Dan Gecker, a real estate lawyer. (Bennett's fears were justified; Willey now looks like the one witness who is cooperating with Ken Starr.) But Gecker declined Cacheris's help, so he had to settle for Vernon Jordan's chauffeur. "The president and Vernon Jordan are already taken," sighs Cacheris, "so it's tough luck for me."

But the bit-player clients are nothing to be ashamed

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of, especially if you've already had your moment in the sun. "After the George thing died down I got calls from B-list people in the White House," says Brand. "I'd had my fill of the principals, and this was a nice break. You can't fight a title fight every six months."

There can even be a kind of nobility in sticking up for the B-list folks. Attorney Richard Sauber represents Jennifer Palmieri, a former aide in Leon Panetta's office, who made the fatal error of occupying the same space as Monica. "I feel sorry for the people caught in the middle of this bullshit who can't afford the $300 an hour, all these federal employees dragged through the mud," Sauber says. He decided not to charge Palmieri for his time; excitement is his only compensation. "I've never come out of any place with all these reporters screaming and shouting at you," he says. "I guess it's a rite of passage in Washington, something to tell your grandchildren about."

The joint defense strategy, which allows different lawyers to share information about their clients and still preserve the attorney-client privilege, has been presented as a nefarious Democratic plot to protect Clinton (although it's quite common in white-collar criminal cases). But, if there is a plot, it's driven less by party loyalty than by ancient tribal links. Lawrence Wechsler, Currie's attorney, knows Bennett from the U.S. attorney's office for the District of Columbia, where they were part of a tight clique back in the '70s. When Bennett worked on the Pentagon fraud and abuse cases during the Reagan era, he doled out some of the business to those in the clique, including Gerard Treanor, Nancy Hernreich's attorney, who shared a firm with Cacheris for many years. Both have worked with William Hundley, Vernon Jordan's attorney.

Those left out of the clique are quick to complain that the insiders are dimmer than they are. White-collar lawyers not involved in the case never fail to mention that Bennett has picked the patsies, that Wechsler, for example, is the "nicest but the least talented" of the three partners in his firm, as one put it.

Some of the envy-tinged criticism is justified. Take the case of Joseph Small, the relatively obscure attorney representing Bayani Nelvis, the White House steward. Small seems just a little too tethered to the White House. After an erroneous report appeared saying Nelvis had told both the Secret Service and the grand jury that he had seen the president and Monica alone together, Small issued a statement calling it "absolutely false." But the statement came from the White House, not from Small's law firm. This aroused Starr's suspicions, prompting him to recall Nelvis before the grand jury for more grilling.

Still, the interclique sniping has gotten a little personal. "I don't mean to be catty here but maybe the guy hasn't got a lot to do, or he's just kind of bored," says one prominent white-collar attorney, referring to Cacheris and the rest of his overeager colleagues. "I'm busy, and I'm too old to drop everything so I can sit outside the grand jury room for an hour while some 25-year-old testifies." Then again, who knows if his phone has rung yet? •

ATLANTA DISPATCH

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

By Doug Cumming

It would be hard to imagine a more unabashed, and more unconstitutional, melding of church and state than the "Motivational Assembly" held last fall at the mostly black Southwest DeKalb High School outside Atlanta, Georgia. The gym was packed that Friday morning—not just with nearly all of Southwest DeKalb's 1,800 students, many of whom assumed attendance was required—but also with hundreds of members from the nearby New Birth Missionary Baptist Church. The church had brought in its own sound system, musicians and singers, video crew, clear-plastic pulpit, and even its own public relations firm. And, as the school's marching band blared out its traditional victory song, "If You Confess the Lord, Call Him Up," the gathering took on the air of a gospel revival.

"I just can't stop . . . praising His name," the audience sang. Later, a girl would be led out of the gym in spasms of charismatic rapture. "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus," the singers continued. As the music subsided, Bishop Eddie L. Long, New Birth's pastor, and the obvious star of the event, took center stage. Holding a cordless microphone that twinkled with his silver cuff links, Long led the students in a confession of faith in Jesus. If it was the first time any of them had said this, Long explained, they had just been saved.

Naturally, Long's sermon did not go unnoticed beyond the school's walls. The assembly, after all, clearly violated three decades of settled legal doctrine on religion in the public schools. As any student of the Constitution knows, in order to protect both the church and the state from each other's corrupting influences, the First Amendment expressly forbids the "establishment" of any one religion by the government. And, since public school pupils are both impressionable and legally required to attend their classes, the courts have reached the very sensible conclusion that it is unconstitutional for schools to sponsor religious activity during official hours.

So perhaps it was not surprising that, in the weeks following the assembly, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Atlanta chapter of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, and the editorial page of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* lined up to hammer the school. A Unitarian-Universalist minister sermonized to his liberal flock in the mostly white northern part of DeKalb County about this affront to the First Amendment. Charles C. Haynes, a Freedom Forum/First Amendment Center scholar who leads

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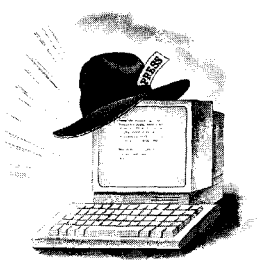
teacher workshops on how to restore a proper place for religion in the classroom, was appalled at what happened at Southwest DeKalb. "Outsiders do not have a right to promote religion to a captive audience," Haynes said. "There's no ambiguity."

But, although few outsiders noticed it, one group conspicuously declined to join in the protests: African Americans. For one thing, most local parents felt strongly that Southwest DeKalb's students needed spiritual guidance. Two weeks earlier, Ronald Gaines, 16, had been stabbed to death on school grounds in the first fatal fight ever in the DeKalb County school system. Gaines and the 15-year-old charged in his murder had not known each other previously. The two boys, probably both in bad moods from having gotten into trouble earlier that day, began calling each other names on a practice field. Soon, a crowd of students gathered around, egging on the boys like spectators at a Roman coliseum. "Do it!" the kids shouted as the hunting knife was flashed; "Yeah!" they exulted after it was plunged into Gaines's chest, according to the only witness who tried to stop the fight.



The circumstances of Gaines's murder would have been shocking in any context, but they were especially shocked given DeKalb County's status as a bastion of black middle-class affluence. Far from downtown Atlanta's housing projects, homes in the DeKalb County subdivisions cost anywhere from $100,000 to $300,000 and are quickly being snapped up by black professionals who seem to cherish the area's suburban blandness. Indeed, the neighborhood around the school is crisscrossed by peaceful streets with names like "Rainbow," "Slumber," and, yes, even "Boring."

The growth of these black suburban neighborhoods was the main reason that, in 1992, the Supreme Court essentially allowed DeKalb County to abandon further attempts at racial integration. Parents in DeKalb County, the court said, were clearly sending their children to majority black schools, not because they had to, but because they wanted to. Indeed, residents envisioned Southwest DeKalb High as an elite public school that would reflect both their racial makeup and their socioeconomic position. And at times it seemed to do just that. With a magnet program for high achievers, a winning football team, and a band chosen for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, Southwest DeKalb High was proof that a nearly all-black school does not have to bear the pathologies of inner-city schools.

Thus, Gaines's murder provoked much soul-searching on the part of parents and administrators. If economic prosperity could not protect DeKalb's students from a culture of violence, what could? School Principal Stanley Henson thought he had hit upon the solution when he allowed Bishop Long's New Birth Church to lead the Motivational Assembly that Friday. New Birth already had roots in the school. The football coach and band director are both New Birth members. "The Nation of Jesus," a men's group at the church, had been mentoring in this and other local schools for years. And New Birth had even stronger roots in the community. Fueled by the black migration that is making DeKalb America's fastest-growing black suburb, New Birth has exploded from relative obscurity just nine years ago to a full-service, 18,000-member tabernacle today. The 44-year-old Bishop Long has become a new darling of the charismatic Christian media and will give the daily invocation in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 24.

Despite its middle-class membership, under the direction of Pastor Long, New Birth's focus is on repairing the ills afflicting less fortunate groups within the black community. Long continually stresses the need for black men to recover sovereignty in their families. And one of New Birth's biggest ministries is prisoners.

Admittedly, Long's New Birth movement holds a certain appeal. Churches like his contain a vitality that has long since been lost by many mainline churches, black and white. And the concerns of these new Pentecostal and Bible-anchored churches—education, reforming criminals, job training, family life—may be as relevant for blacks in the '90s as civil rights was for the leading black churches in the '60s. But, while black churches have a long and illustrious history of guiding their congregations in the fight against social injustice, New Birth represents a radical departure from this tradition.

In contrast to Martin Luther King's progressive crusade for civil rights, Long sees his battle as one of restoring a Christian culture that not only protected the black family for generations, but created the United States as well. Like Pat Robertson, Long would remind non-Christians that they are merely respected guests in a nation founded by Bible-believers. "I go all the way back to the root system," he explains. "You're welcome in my house, but you will not change the way this house, or this nation, is run." And he is not shy about translating his beliefs into a call to arms. Several weeks after the school assembly, he held a similar rally for Southwest DeKalb's students inside his church. This time, however, Long added an even more explicit lesson to the sermon he gave the roughly 2,000 students in attendance. "The ignorance of religious rights needs to be held up" to correction by God, he says he told them. "Eventually, we're going to have to force it."

Haynes notes the irony of a minority group suppressing the rights of another minority, that is, the minority of students at Southwest DeKalb who might have been offended by Protestant worship. But the church members at the school that morning were caught up in another aspect of their minority experience. Religiously motivated defiance of the law, after all, was at the heart of abolitionism and the civil rights movement; here was yet another historic defiance, suggested Thomas Brown, a church member who spoke. Brown, who also happens to be the county's public safety director, described how he once told his nine-

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year-old daughter that the Supreme Court says people can't use the name of Jesus Christ in school, "yet here we are, in defiance of the U.S. Supreme Court, calling the name of Jesus Christ." Oblivious to the downside of his small victory, Brown continued, "They say movements start in strange places, whether a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, or the gymnasium of Southwest DeKalb High School. Well, a movement is about to start today."

DOUG CUMMING is the senior education writer for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution.*

Our last chance to jail Louise Woodward.

LOCK 'ER UP

By Maggie Scarf

February 9 was the first anniversary of eight-month-old Matthew Eappen's death, but the parents of Louise Woodward, the 19-year-old English au pair convicted of manslaughter in the baby's death, don't seem overwhelmed by sympathy for the child or for his grieving parents. Rather, they regard their own daughter as a victim. In an interview aired on the BBC, Woodward's mother, Susan, lashed out at the baby's mother, Deborah Eappen, saying her victim-impact statement during the sentencing phase of Louise's trial was a "purely theatrical performance." Woodward's father said he felt "guilty" and regretted advising his daughter to go to Boston in the first place. "I live with it all the time," he said.

Meanwhile, Woodward herself has appeared untroubled since last November 10, when Judge Hiller Zobel downgraded her conviction from second-degree murder to involuntary manslaughter and reduced her sentence from life to "time served" in custody—279 days—a decision that, given the hoopla surrounding the case, many found tantamount to an acquittal. Some $500,000 has poured into the Louise Woodward defense fund (though family friends complain that travel, hotel, and legal costs have reduced this sum to $330,000). Boston's many Louise-watchers have often spotted her out shopping at small, pricey boutiques. She has been photographed walking hand-in-hand on the beach with British TV tabloid journalist Giovanni Ulleri.

When he freed the au pair, Zobel's only proviso was that she stay in the Boston area until the appeals of her case had been completed. Now, that process has swung into motion. Both defense and prosecution view this as a chance to correct the injustices of the trial, as they see them. The Barry Scheck-led Woodward defense team, which initially pledged to battle on for complete vindication, has had a change of heart. The lawyers now say Louise will accept a range of options other than acquittal. One would be a reduction of the manslaughter conviction to assault and battery. Another, less favored, option would be to uphold the involuntary manslaughter conviction and Zobel's time-served sentence.

But the prosecution wants the jury's second-degree murder verdict, and the accompanying life sentence (with parole possible after 15 years), reinstated. Failing that, former Woodward prosecutor Martha Coakley says, the prosecution would accept a manslaughter conviction, but with the time-served sentence to be reviewed in light of the factual findings in the case, which indicate that the au pair was "wanton and reckless" with the baby. And, under Massachusetts sentencing guidelines, "wanton and reckless" conduct entails a three- to five-year sentence.

The seven justices of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts have the power to do almost anything they want with the case. The likeliest outcome, says Marc G. Perlin of the Suffolk University Law School in Boston, is that the court will decide to do nothing: deferring to the wide discretion Massachusetts law allows trial judges, the justices will allow Zobel's light sentence to stand. But, in my view, such a ruling would only compound the injustice that has been done thus far.

Let's revisit the facts of the case. Toward the end of January 1997, Sunil Eappen came home unexpectedly to find his sons, eight-month-old Matthew and two-year-old Brendan, apparently on their own and unattended. Woodward was in the basement doing laundry. This apparently led to an antagonistic exchange, which caused a fresh eruption of an older dispute between Woodward and her employers, a disagreement about the young woman's late nights out. Louise Woodward was no Mary Poppins; she reportedly wanted to be out each evening socializing and going to the theater. So the upshot of the laundry incident was the delivery of an ultimatum: there would have to be a mutually agreeable curfew, or Woodward would have to leave.

This final warning was given on February 4, and clearly there were some intense feelings about the issue in the family air. But the hard and ugly question—one that must haunt the dead child's parents—is whether or not the bad feelings were being acted out in the nanny's relationship with the child. For it was on February 4 that Matthew was rushed to the emergency room with a two-and-a-half-inch crack in his skull; he had suffered convulsions and had stopped breathing while under Woodward's care. According to detectives, she acknowledged that she might have been "a little rough" with the baby.

Later, on the witness stand, Woodward denied ever having used this phrase. But it now appears that she *did* tell a defense polygraph expert, "Well, I told [police] that I may have been a little rough with him"—an admission that was never entered into evidence but has

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surfaced in court records since the trial ended. This bolsters police testimony during the trial, which indicated that Woodward told officers she had shaken the baby "lightly," dropping him on the bed at one point and on a pile of towels in the bathroom at another.

A key aspect of Woodward's defense, ironically, was the existence of pre-existing injuries—a skull wound and a hairline wrist fracture that no one knew anything about until baby Matthew's autopsy. Scheck contended that these injuries could not be linked to any action of Woodward's and could have suddenly flared up through no fault of Woodward's, causing the baby's death—ergo, the au pair was not guilty. But the jury affirmed the prosecution's version: the baby's mortal injuries had been caused by sustained violent shaking ("shaken-baby syndrome") and by the kind of blow to the head that results from being struck or slammed against a floor or a wall.

Woodward had lost in court, but *not* in the court of public opinion. Sympathy with the au pair's plight spread with the whoosh of a brush fire, not only in her native England, but also, to a lesser extent, on this side of the Atlantic. This surge of positive feeling was accompanied by mounting indignation at the baby's bereaved parents, especially Deborah, who chose to work part-time rather than stay home with the baby herself. In the strangest of moral turnabouts, the Eappens somehow metamorphosed into the bad guys. It was in the midst of this transatlantic uproar that Judge Zobel decided to downgrade the charge.

To many legal experts, it must be said, this made sense. Even if one believed that the au pair had become so agitated and enraged that she had "lost it" momentarily, it was hard to suppose that she had actually felt malice, in the legal sense of a "specific intention to kill or cause grievous injury." Still, Zobel's abbreviated sentence had the air of exonerating Woodward completely—or at least of rendering moot the question of her accountability for what had, after all, been a defenseless little human being's death.

But suppose the jury's verdict had come to the judge *without* any media hoopla? Would the outcome have been the same? That is, would the second-degree murder conviction have been reduced to manslaughter? Would the sentence have been different? *The Boston Globe* surveyed 22 recent cases. "No [Massachusetts] judge has allowed a person convicted of manslaughter in the killing of a baby to sidestep prison with time served," the paper reported. "In most of the 22 cases the assailant, like Woodward, was convicted of manslaughter. They typically received a sentence of 15 to 20 years in prison. Virtually all remain in prison today."

Prosecutors in my own state, next-door Connecticut, told me that, where specific intent can't be proven, and where the defendant is a young person with no prior convictions, the charge would be manslaughter, not murder. The typical sentence in the event of conviction, however, would generally be four to five years. Michael Dearington, New Haven County state's attorney, says he had tried a case involving a one-year-old girl being watched over by her uncle. The child had been crying incessantly, and the uncle became so incensed and frustrated that he went completely out of control. "What he did, finally, was pick the baby up and throw her in the bathtub, causing a skull injury," recounted Dearington. "The little girl died as a result." The uncle was convicted of first-degree murder (with a sentence of 60 years); after an appeal, the Connecticut Supreme Court reduced the charge to manslaughter, and the trial judge reimposed the maximum sentence for that felony—20 years.

Sociology Professor Richard Gelles, author of *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family*, says it is well-known that the length of an offender's sentence will depend to a large extent upon the age of the victim, the sex of the offender, the relationship of the offender to the victim, and the race of the offender and victim. I asked Gelles what he thought Woodward's manslaughter sentence would have been if she'd come from Barbados or Trinidad. "She'd have gotten ten years, five to serve," he answered promptly. "And what if the baby had been killed by the boyfriend of the baby's single mother?" I inquired. "In that instance, *he'd* have gotten twenty years," Gelles said.

According to Dr. John Leventhal, a nationally recognized expert in the field of child abuse, it's highly probable that Woodward not only *committed* the crime but that she *acknowledged* it in her interviews with police investigators on the day of the emergency. Leventhal, the medical director of Yale-New Haven Hospital's Child Abuse Committee, told me that Woodward's "initial statement to the effect that she might have been a 'little rough' with the baby is as much of a confession as people working in this field ever do get to hear."

The existence of prior injuries is quite significant, too, though not in the way Woodward's attorneys suggested. For, when physicians treating young children encounter the serious injuries that make them suspect abuse—for instance, a skull fracture, or bleeding around the brain or behind the eyes—they will typically order x-rays of the entire body. What is seen in a substantial percentage of cases, said Leventhal, "are *older* injuries that are healing, much like the ones that were discovered on autopsy after the little Eappen baby's death."

Perhaps the circus atmosphere around Woodward's trial made it hard for people to stay focused on the core issue: Was Louise Woodward responsible in the death of little Matthew Eappen? After all, an impartial jury, and, indeed, Judge Zobel himself, have answered "yes" to that question. And, in the view of family violence expert Richard Gelles, "This little guy suffered. He suffered a lot, and many of us are measuring his suffering in the balance of what Woodward's ultimate punishment was." Now, the Supreme Judicial Court has a chance to reconsider the case under calmer circumstances. My own hope, as a citizen and as a parent, is that, in this quieter atmosphere, the cries of a little baby will at last be heard. •

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Why we need international war crimes trials.

DUE PROCESSES

By Gary Jonathan Bass

The international war crimes tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia, once written off even by some of its supporters as a well-intentioned but ineffectual experiment, has been making remarkable strides in recent weeks. Since the summer, NATO has conducted three raids to arrest indicted war criminals in Bosnia; this has evidently scared some other suspects into turning themselves in. Four suspects, all Bosnian Serbs, have surrendered to the tribunal since mid-January. For years, the tribunal's 24-cell prison, mostly empty, was a symbol of the tribunal's powerlessness; on March 4, Dragoljub Kunarac became the twenty-fourth suspect in custody.

But the tribunal is still far from being an unqualified success. The most important accused war criminals—Radovan Karadzic, the wartime Bosnian Serb leader, and Ratko Mladic, his military chief—remain at large. Snaring the rest of the suspects on the tribunal's list is a major challenge for NATO, and many skeptics remain. The same people in Congress who never wanted to use military force to help Bosnia during the war don't want to use it to arrest war criminals; the Pentagon doesn't want to risk soldiers in raids or subsequent reprisals; and Bill Clinton recently suggested that if Karadzic is "deep enough underground, if he can't have any impact on it, we might make the peace process work anyway."

It is up to advocates like Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to make a persuasive case for international justice—and it is not, alas, a simple case to make. Men like Karadzic richly deserve criminal prosecution, and one would like to think doing the decent thing would automatically be good strategy, too. But an examination of a century's worth of international efforts at prosecuting war criminals suggests a muddier picture. In the end, war crimes trials are worthwhile, not because they represent an ideal solution, but because they are the least unappealing of several problematic alternatives for dealing with atrocities.

One drawback to tribunals is that it takes time—and patience—for trials to bring reconciliation. Take the best-case scenario: post-World War II West Germany, the country with the best record of coming to grips with its criminal past. The spectacle of Nuremberg initially had an impressive impact, according to polls in the U.S.-occupied zone of Germany. But, as trials for lesser Nazis dragged on, many Germans turned against the proceedings. In 1949, Konrad Adenauer, West Germany's post-war chancellor, followed public opinion and asked the Allies for clemency for Nazi war criminals. It took time and patience to remake Germany. Things went worse in Japan, where the Allied international military tribunal at Tokyo—a sibling court to Nuremberg—is publicly scorned to this day, and where there's still a depressing amount of sympathy for those Japanese the Allies branded war criminals.

In Germany and Japan, at least, there was little chance for a destabilizing backlash against the war crimes tribunals, because both countries were firmly under Allied occupation. But resentment of foreign-imposed war crimes trials can be much more dangerous when there's less military commitment. The best examples come from the aftermath of World War I, when the Allies imposed war crimes trials in Germany and Ottoman Turkey. In 1920, the British Embassy in Berlin reported nervously that Allied demand for the trial of German war criminals, including men as popular as Hindenburg, "arouses passionate resentment amongst all classes," and it worried that such policies might topple the shaky German government. The Allies' efforts galvanized right-wing nationalists who were significantly more dangerous than the Hohenzollerns' loyalists. Hermann Göring first encountered Hitler at one of the many rallies held across Germany to protest French demands that the Weimar government turn over accused German war criminals.

There was the same kind of backlash in the crumbling Ottoman Empire. By March 1919, a new Ottoman government eager to mollify the Allies had arrested a huge group of prominent wartime Ottoman leaders, including Said Halim Pasha, the grand vizier during the 1915 Armenian massacres. They went on trial in April 1919 before a special Turkish court martial. But the court's first death sentence brought mobs into the streets. Britain's efforts to punish war criminals became a rallying cry for Young Turk nationalists and for Atatürk's

GARY JONATHAN BASS, a fellow at Harvard's Center for International Affairs and a writer for *The Economist*, is working on a book on international war crimes tribunals.

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A Message from Negative Population Growth, Inc.

Why Does Our Government Allow Over One Million New Immigrants to Come Here Every Year?

...When a Majority of Americans Say We Should Not Admit More Than 100,000 a Year at Most!!

A recent Roper poll, sponsored by NPG, Inc., showed that a majority of Americans (54%) want immigration cut to not more than 100,000 a year. So why does our Federal Government allow more than ten times that many to come here every year?

The poll showed 70% of Americans – that's over two out of three – want immigration cut drastically to not over 300,000 a year. How in the world can our government possibly justify an immigration policy that allows four times that many to come here every year? Don't our elected representatives have an obligation to heed the clearly expressed wishes of the American public?

The poll also showed that a substantial number of Americans (20%) simply want immigration halted completely. In other words, one American in five wants no immigration at all.

We urge Congress, with the vigorous support of President Clinton, to enact legislation that would drastically reduce the present level of immigration, and thus bring our immigration policy into line with the clearly expressed wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Illegal Immigration – Out of Control

Polls have shown for years that, almost unanimously, Americans want illegal immigration stopped. Despite that, our Federal Government has done very little to reduce illegal immigration, much less stop it. An estimated 350,000 illegal aliens settle here permanently each year. That is over three times more than the 100,000 a year a majority of Americans favor for total immigration. These illegal settlers join a pool of an estimated five to six million illegal aliens who are already living here permanently in violation of our laws.

The Roper poll cited above showed that 74% of Americans (three out of every four) want illegal aliens identified and deported. So why is our government not doing just that? In 1996, only about 110,000 illegal aliens were deported. A vastly increased program of deportations would not only deter prospective illegal migrants abroad, but also motivate those already here to leave voluntarily.

The Central Issue – Overpopulation

NPG urges a drastic reduction in immigration solely because of its contribution to the disastrous growth of our U.S. population. We are on the path from our present population of 268 million to a population of nearly 500 million by 2100. More than 90% of that growth will be the direct result of post-2000 immigration.

Immigration is the driving force behind the population growth that is devastating our environment and the quality of our lives. Primarily because of immigration we are rushing at breakneck speed toward an environmental and economic disaster.

U.S. Population Size – A Vitally Important National Issue

Other things being equal, our population size determines our impact on our already over-stressed environment and increasingly scarce resources. The size of our population is, therefore, a vitally important national issue.

If we are to have any hope at all of creating an economy that will be sustainable indefinitely, in a sound and healthy environment, with an adequate standard of living for all, we need a smaller, not a larger, U.S. population. But we will never be able to achieve a smaller population unless we reduce immigration to a small fraction of its present level. That is a simple fact.

Isn't there someone among our political leaders who is willing to recognize the need for a smaller U.S. population and for public policies to achieve it? He or she would have the support of a majority of Americans. The Roper poll cited above showed that 54% of Americans believe that our country is already overpopulated.

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successful drive to expel the British from Turkey.

It's not so different today. Milorad Dodik, the new, relatively moderate prime minister of the Serb entity in Bosnia, known as Republika Srpska, faces roughly the same dilemma the Ottoman sultanate did. His uncertain grip on power is threatened by Karadzic, but also by any impression he's cooperating with Western efforts to arrest Karadzic. (One way to help Dodik: the West could make more of an effort to explain to Bosnian Serbs that, contrary to years of nationalist propaganda, the tribunal isn't an unfair anti-Serb court.)

Another problem with tribunals is that justice is often symbolic: there's no chance of putting anything close to all of the guilty parties on trial. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen estimates that there were at least 100,000 perpetrators of the Holocaust, and perhaps as many as 500,000. But, according to Nuremberg prosecutor Telford Taylor, only about 3,500 Germans had been tried by 1948. Gérard Prunier, a Rwanda expert, estimates that there were between 80,000 and 100,000 murderers in the 1994 Rwanda genocide. But the U.N.'s Rwanda tribunal has indicted just 35 people (although among the 23 suspects in custody are some of the most important men in Rwanda's old Hutu-led regime). The ex-Yugoslavia tribunal has publicly indicted only 74 men. (There are an undisclosed number of secret indictments.) Of the 24 in custody, only a few, like Bosnian Croat leader Dario Kordic and his Gen. Tihomir Blaskic, are high-ranking.

Yet another worry: Although supporters of tribunals usually claim such courts deter war crimes, the war criminals are all too often unimpressed. In May 1915, for example, while Ottoman Turkey was massacring about a million Armenians, the Allies issued a direct threat to Constantinople: "The Allied governments announce publicly to the Sublime Porte that they will hold personally responsible [for] these crimes all members of the Ottoman government and those of their agents who are implicated in such massacres." Talaat Pasha, the Ottoman minister of the interior, and Enver Pasha, the minister of war, were unfazed. As Henry Morgenthau Sr., the American ambassador in Constantinople, reported back to Washington, the Ottomans "refused to modify even when Russia, France, and Great Britain threatened Ottoman Cabinet ministers with personal responsibility." Sometimes, it's the lower-level perpetrators who aren't deterred, even when their leaders are. In May 1945, Himmler tried to ingratiate himself with the Allies by ordering an end to the "death marches" of Jews; his men continued their killings.

True, international pressure has occasionally yielded results in the Bosnian conflict. Peter Galbraith, until recently the American ambassador to Croatia, says that berating Mate Boban, a Bosnian Croat leader, made the Croats shut down some camps. Some senior American officials say the tribunal's indictment of Serb rebel leader Milan Martic for ordering rocket attacks on Zagreb helped deter similar attacks later on. But such successes pale next to the tribunal's failure to deter the single worst war crime in Europe since World War II. In July 1995, two years after the creation of the feeble ex-Yugoslavia tribunal in The Hague, Mladic's Bosnian Serb army slaughtered 7,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica. The tribunal sent new investigators and issued new indictments for Karadzic and Mladic, but the Bosnian Serbs simply defied the United Nations, the world community, and the tribunal. And, just last week, Serbian units carried out vicious reprisals against Albanian rebel supporters in Kosovo despite the example of recent trials in The Hague.

So why bother setting up tribunals? Because they still serve some vital functions. Although it may seem elementary, it's critically important to record what crimes actually happened. The Nuremberg court assembled a definitive record of Nazi criminality—a record that, even today, arms historians against would-be deniers. Conversely, the failure of the Constantinople trials has made it easier for successive Turkish regimes to deny the Armenian massacres. Lies like that pave the way to future violence. Such records are vital today, when Hutu *génocidaires* deny there was any unusual violence in Rwanda and when Karadzic claims that the Bosnian government faked several massacres.

Even if war crimes tribunals don't bring near-term reconciliation, they are still better than the usual alternative: vengeance. Near the end of World War II, the first American and British plan for dealing with top Nazi war criminals was simple: summary execution. In September 1944, the Treasury Department was considering shooting as many as 2,500 Germans. That was less than the 50,000 or 100,000 Stalin suggested killing, but it's likely even the Anglo-American plans would have gotten bloodily out of control. If many Germans came to resent the Allies' war crimes trials, they would have resented such executions even more. It was surely wiser to use judicial mechanisms, like Nuremberg, to restrain and focus Allied revenge.

Also, if the international community does not bring perpetrators to justice, vigilantes may just kill them instead. In 1919, the British high commissioner in Constantinople warned that, if the punishment of the Young Turks was ignored, "it may safely be predicted that the question of retribution for the deportations and massacres will be an element of venomous trouble in the life of each of the countries concerned." Sure enough, in 1921, Talaat Pasha, a mastermind of the Armenian massacres who had fled to Germany, was shot to death on a Berlin street by a revenge-minded Armenian. Said Halim Pasha, the former grand vizier, was gunned down in Rome the same year.

Even without such dire scenarios, an impartial tribunal is a useful way of defusing the inevitable tensions when old victims and perpetrators run into one another. The feebleness of international efforts at justice so far has left a vacuum that's filled by even more disruptive local Balkan legal and quasi-legal processes. Croatian

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courts, for example, are full of extremely dubious cases against Serbs. Franjo Tudjman's regime issued a general amnesty for the Serbs who rebelled against Croatian control in the border region called the Krajina, but Croatia keeps its Serbs off balance by not letting them know who's safe and who's still suspected of war crimes that go beyond the amnesty. As of October 1997, the court in Zadar said it still had to look at approximately 10,000 cases against Serb rebels. Some of these trials prove provocative. In April 1997, a local Croatian court in Zadar tried Momcilo Perisic, the chief of staff of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) and 18 other JNA officers in absentia, sentencing Perisic to 20 years in jail for ordering artillery attacks on Zadar in 1991. This, predictably, infuriated Serbia.

Understandably, considering the horrific losses suffered by Bosnians, the Muslim-Croat Federation in Bosnia has its own war crimes prosecutions, too, which can also inflame local tensions. The federation trials are almost all against low-level Bosnian Serbs who fought against the Bosnians. Some are basically fair, but, according to the Office of the High Representative's monitors who follow the Bosnian trials, there are a lot of flaws: excessively tough sentencing, judges who are still used to old Yugoslav jurisprudence, a lack of space for an effective defense, and an inability to get to witnesses from Republika Srpska. And sometimes the trials go blatantly awry: just consider the case of Sretko Damjanovic, a Bosnian Serb convicted in 1993 of killing a group of Muslims, two of whom turned up alive in 1996.

Some high-profile cases have sparked crises. On February 6, Bosnian intelligence agents in Sarajevo captured a Bosnian Serb soldier accused of shooting Bosnia's deputy prime minister in 1993; in a tense standoff, Serbs took Muslim hostages in reprisal. On January 30, 1996, Djordje Djukic, a Bosnian Serb army general and Mladic crony, blundered into Bosnian government custody. The Bosnian government held Djukic as a major war criminal. After a nerve-wracking standoff between NATO and the Bosnian Serbs, America had Djukic flown to The Hague, where the tribunal decided there was enough evidence to indict him. (In a bizarre the twist, he soon died of cancer.) Bosnian Serbs may scorn the tribunal, but they would have been even angrier to see Djukic in a Bosnian government court.

Do war crimes tribunals work? The only serious response is: Compared to what? War crimes tribunals have clear *potential* to work, and to work much better than anything else statesmen have come up with at the end of a war. A well-run legal process is superior, both practically and morally, to apathy or vengeance. True, the track record of international war crimes tribunals so far has often been underwhelming. Hamstrung for almost all of its existence by a lack of serious Western political support, The Hague tribunal has often looked like a failure, along the lines of Constantinople, rather than a heady success, along the lines of Nuremberg. But the lesson should be to do a better job from now on. If at first you don't succeed, try again. •

The strange rituals of Federal Reserve fanatics.

PRAISED BE GREENSPAN

By Jonathan Chait and Stephen Glass

Bond traders, as a rule, do not have much time to loaf around, and the Wall Street investment house RBL takes its work ethic to particularly militant extremes. Like many other investment houses, RBL delivers lunch to its traders' desks to save them time. An assistant buys anniversary and Christmas gifts for the traders' families. A barber cuts the traders' hair while they take phone calls. A college intern reads books, visits art galleries, and views foreign films, then writes a weekly "culture summary" so the traders can fake it at parties. And one trader is now testing a handheld urinal normally used by cops on stakeouts. "Every moment counts," he explains. "If I am in the john, I fall behind, and that's unacceptable."

But, once a year, RBL permits its indefatigable drones a brief respite. At about three o'clock in the afternoon on March 6, nearly all of the traders drop whatever they're doing and file into a conference room. For the next 15 minutes, they pass around a card, bring out a cake, and sing "Happy Birthday." "But when we come to the last line—'Happy Birthday to yooo'—there's always this awkward pause because no one knows who's supposed to blow out the candles," says Ron Thompson, a senior trader. "He never shows up to his own party. I'm not sure we even invite him." Not that it would matter. You see, the birthday honoree is not a colleague at RBL but a man most of the celebrants have never met: Alan Greenspan, the chairman

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of the Federal Reserve Board. The birthday party, Thompson says, is "our little way of saying thank you and hoping for another year of health and prosperity and good interest rates.... He's been good to us, and it's a way to honor him."

RBL isn't the only investment house that pays homage to the chairman. TRS—another bond-trading outfit—has turned an empty office into a Greenspan shrine. Dozens of news photographs of Greenspan adorn the walls; glass casing encloses two Bic pens Greenspan supposedly used in 1993. Quotations from more than 30 of his speeches are posted under a sign that reads "Greenspan's Teachings." The centerpiece is a red leather chair that sits in the middle of the room, surrounded by blue velvet ropes. A placard perched on the armrest says Greenspan sat in the chair in 1948—at the time, he was still in college. "Some nights when we've lost money," trader Brent Donalds confides, "I come in here and sit in the chair and think. It gives me inspiration."

Many trading houses use a software program which translates any Greenspan sentence into a predicted market reaction, using a database of all his public remarks. The program bills itself as the "Talmud of the Federal Reserve—interpreting his every word!" At one large trading house, trader Ron Mitchell has two pictures on his desk. The first—a black-and-white wedding photo of Mitchell and his wife—is three inches tall and five inches long. It is mostly obscured, however, by a four-by-six-inch glossy of Greenspan testifying before the House Banking Committee. A half-dozen other items of Greenspanalia adorn his desk: a Greenspan baseball card, which lists interest rates on the back instead of batting averages; a Greenspan figurine that bounces up and down on a spring; a small rock carved into a Greenspan profile. "When things go well, I hold the Greenspan picture between my two hands and say thank you," says Mitchell, who was born Episcopalian but does not practice any religion. "When things go poorly, I also take the photo in my hands and pray." While praying, he tries to look directly into Greenspan's eyes—"that's how I feel the most connection."

The Federal Reserve—and, by extension, its chairman—has always fascinated the financial community. If you make your living trading stocks or bonds, anything the Federal Reserve chairman does to interest rates, or says about interest rates, or even says about anything else touches the very essence of your daily existence. (Wall Streeters remember Greenspan's utterance of the words "irrational exuberance" the way a Kansas farmer remembers an especially nasty tornado.) Among such people, it's not surprising that Greenspan has become a God-like figure, holding sway over their lives from his mysterious and distant temple in Washington. When the crops are healthy and the livestock fat, the people know who to thank. Right now, Greenspan is reaping their praise.

But Greenspan idolatry, far from an isolated Wall Street phenomenon, is part of a larger trend. As politics have become less relevant to the fate of the nation, as stock ownership has spread, and as the current Federal Reserve chairman, appointed by President Reagan in 1987, has received accolades for an economic recovery soon to enter its eighth year, the entire country has come to see Greenspan the way Brent Donalds and Ron Mitchell see him: not as a public official, but as a kind of living god to be regarded with helpless awe.

Sure, Greenspan and his predecessors have always enjoyed a lofty stature; it's long been a cliché to call the Fed chairman "the most powerful man in America." Today, though, that monicker seems sadly inadequate. Greenspan-worship has spread not only deep but wide—it affects not just New Yorkers, but Omahans, Peorians, and, most especially, Washingtonians. Fed-watchers who describe Greenspan now routinely toss off words like "deity" and "demigod." Greenspan has taken a new place within the constellation of power. His advice is sought, and his judgments obeyed. His proclamations are repeated and expounded upon. He is hailed and feted wherever he sets tassel-loafered foot. He is loved, and he is feared. And he is never, ever questioned.

Greenspan's majesty derives from a vague but widely held sense that he has masterminded the nation's prosperity. "I think Bill [Clinton] gets too much credit for the good economy," Gennifer Flowers told Larry King last month. "I think Alan Greenspan did most of the work." Flowers is trained as a lounge singer, which does not necessarily disqualify her opinions on macroeconomic controversies; Greenspan was a musician himself in the 1940s before turning to a life of number-crunching. But Flowers has shown little inclination toward a career in central banking, so if people like her attribute the cheerful state of the union to Greenspan, then it is fair to conclude that Greenspan-worship has gone mainstream. There is something mystical about the appreciation he receives. Indeed, it arises largely from the fact that people do not fully understand just what he does.

In the popular imagination, Greenspan is an enigmatic but brilliant wizard holed up in the Federal Reserve, sitting before an enormous panel of knobs and levers, fine-tuning the economy down to the tiniest detail. In truth, the Federal Reserve can directly affect only one economic factor: interest rates. Raising interest rates makes it harder for people to borrow money and hence slows down the economy. Lowering interest rates has the opposite effect. While this is a potent tool, it is hardly a precise one. The effects of boosting or cutting interest rates can take a while to materialize. The Federal Reserve can cause recessions, or it can let them last too long, or it can overreact. Like a barber with a chainsaw, Greenspan has a lot of power but not much control.

There is also an irony here. The elevation of

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Greenspan has occurred during an historical moment when the Federal Reserve doesn't have a particularly clear understanding of its job. This is because the guideposts by which it traditionally steers monetary policy no longer hold much validity. The Fed used to pay a lot of attention to the money supply. The idea was to let the supply grow at a slow but constant rate—fast growth would mean inflation, slow growth might mean a recession. But, because of new financial instruments like money-market accounts and ATM cards, the Fed has a hard time calculating the money supply. You can't base your decisions on the money supply if you don't know what the money supply is.

The Fed also used to follow the unemployment rate. Many economists believed that if unemployment fell below about six and a half percent, inflation would rise. So, if unemployment dropped below this point, the Fed would get ready to raise interest rates and slow things down before inflation broke out. But that notion, too, has fallen by the wayside. Unemployment is now below five percent, and inflation is dropping, not rising. The Federal Reserve used to be very confident about how to manage the economy. Now, nobody is.

The point of this is that the Federal Reserve—or at least its chairman—is now more inclined to let the economy run its course and see what happens. Think of Greenspan as a basketball coach: he doesn't strictly choreograph his team's every move; instead, he lets his players play. Since 1995, he has made just one tiny change in interest rates, and that came in March of 1997. Essentially, he has done nothing. The strategy seems to work, and of course Greenspan deserves some credit—doing something might have messed up the economy. Nevertheless, it is also true that we would have had the exact same monetary policies over the last year if, instead of Greenspan, the Fed had been run by a turkey sandwich.

Greenspan, then, is a caretaker Fed chairman. He has enjoyed the good fortune of presiding over an economy that, for structural reasons he and other economists don't completely understand, is capable of producing very low unemployment without causing inflation. And Greenspan has had the good sense not to blow it. He is also, by all accounts, a genuinely kind and decent person. Yet none of this explains why Greenspan is ascribed an almost otherworldly power and omniscience.

Part of the answer is that he is surrounded at all times by high-level—yet trembling—supplicants, a state of affairs that could make even the most ordinary person seem celestial. Powerful people, of course, are often followed by sycophants and flunkies, who, in turn, are heavy hitters in the eyes of even lesser mortals. But the status-worship accorded to Greenspan exceeds even presidential standards. Perhaps the most scientifically accurate measure of his hierarchical standing is his rank within the Washington social scene. Last year, when one well-known Washington hostess was planning a dinner party, word slipped out that President Clinton and Greenspan might be attending. Within days, she says, more than a dozen uninvited Washington socialites called to see if they could attend the event. Only one mentioned a desire to see the president.

The very presence of the Fed chairman drives the most haughty and jaded Washingtonians into raptures of servile idolatry. At one small party last year, says another hostess, she caught a guest sneaking around the dinner table during cocktails; he was trying to position Greenspan's seat-assignment card next to his. To make the shuffle work, the guest put his wife at a different table. The hostess says she subtly put the cards back in order before the salad was served and then confronted the guest. His response? "I can have dinner with my wife any night of the week. In the course of human history, having dinner with Greenspan might be as important as the Last Supper."

Yet surely not even Jesus, or the Buddha, could project sagacity as effortlessly as Greenspan does. These prophets, after all, were always good for a pithy, quotable proverb. As for Greenspan, "He's famous for not speaking at parties," according to one hostess, a journalist. "It's really amazing to watch. He nods a lot and nods some more and at the end of the night everyone says: 'Wow! The man is brilliant.' But he didn't say anything." A congressman's wife says she watched Greenspan carefully at one cocktail party last year, trying to quantify how much he said. In more than 35 minutes of chatter, Greenspan uttered only 22 words—ten of them were to the person serving hors d'oeuvres. After the event, the observer interviewed the guests who were chatting with Greenspan. "All Alan had said were things like 'Nice to meet you,'" she maintains. "But from that people were trying to guess whether or not that meant he was going to raise interest rates. And they all agreed he was very insightful. That's the word they used—'insightful.'"

The workaday equivalent of Greenspan's dinner party sycophants is the pack of journalists that shadows him. Since Greenspan's slightest turn of phrase can make or break the markets, financial reporters tend to produce breathless stenography rather than critical analysis. Even nonfinancial journalists who cover the Fed do so in a manner fundamentally different from the way they treat other important institutions. Greenspan comes across as a politically transcendent figure with awesome powers that are rarely explained—or that even could be explained. News stories about the Fed bear less resemblance to stories about, say, Congress than they do to stories about the weather.

There are several reasons for this. Greenspan does not hold press conferences or speak to journalists on the record, which makes it difficult to assess his thoughts and actions. He does dispense background information to a few reporters from prestige newspa-

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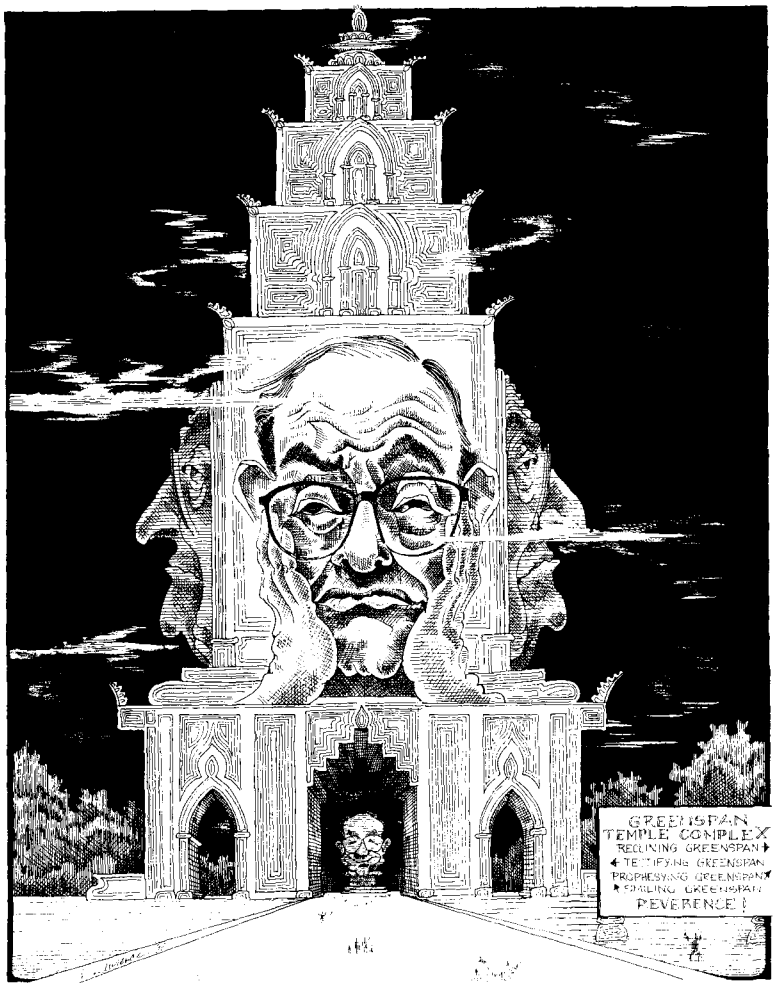
pers on the condition that they do not even divulge that the interview happened. Given the technical complexity of monetary policy, Fed reporters badly need these background chats. "It has the effect of bringing you into his world," explains James Risen, a *Los Angeles Times* reporter (and past TNR contributor), who used to cover Greenspan. "Reporters have come to accept the basic assumptions of the Greenspan Fed."

Authoritative commentators on Federal Reserve policy and politics tend to come from what *National Journal* reporter Paul Starobin has called "Club Fed": the network of former Fed governors and staffers who populate think tanks and consulting firms. Fed alumni act as a kind of fraternity that shares an abiding belief in their alma mater's preeminent role in guiding the economy. Since others usually lack the expertise, the important opinions on the Federal Reserve come from the coterie of Greenspan acolytes. To grasp the political effect of this, imagine that the only trusted commentators on the president were former White House staffers.



ALAN GREENSPAN BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Greenspan's ascent to Olympus is not, of course, a media illusion. If the president and Congress contested Greenspan's policies, then coverage of the Fed would acknowledge those criticisms. But, such dissent, once commonplace, has virtually disappeared. Even Senator Tom Harkin, an Iowa Democrat, left-wing agrarian populist, and one of the most vociferous Fed critics in recent memory, can now barely be coaxed to speak ill of the chairman. His old nemesis, Harkin happily admits, "has been doing better" and "seems to have shifted his views." So the media's reverent treatment of the Fed ultimately reflects political reality. Greenspan has taken his place in the rarefied air above petty politics only because the petty politicians have elevated him there.

This radical change has happened so slowly that almost nobody has noticed. The political system used to split control over the economy between the Fed, on the one hand, and Congress and the president, on the other. Under this arrangement, the economy was, according to a now-obsolete expression, a "car with two drivers." The economy, in other words, was like one of those driver-ed cars in which both the driver and the passenger have their own steering wheel, gas pedal, and brake. The Fed controlled monetary policy. It would manipulate interest rates, lowering them to stimulate the economy or raising them to slow the economy down. Congress and the president controlled fiscal policy. In slow times, they could cut taxes or raise spending. When the economy threatened to overheat and cause inflation, they could raise taxes or cut spending.

Not surprisingly, the two sides frequently struggled over the speed and direction of the economy, with varying results. Weaker Fed chairmen often submitted to political pressure, giving presidents and Congress a relatively free hand to shape the economy. Stronger Fed chairmen—like Paul Volcker, Greenspan's predecessor—would brutally contradict the president's policies. In 1981, for instance, the president and Congress enacted a large tax cut while Volcker's Federal Reserve yanked up interest rates. In other words, one of the drivers was flooring the gas pedal, while the other was slamming on the brakes.

This decades-long tug of war came to an end in the early 1980s. Huge, structural budget deficits made it impossible to stimulate the economy with taxes or spending. It was as if one of the drivers had pressed the gas so hard the pedal stuck to the floor. Congress and the president could try to reduce the deficit; they could manipulate taxes and spending in order to alter the distribution of wealth. But they could no longer steer the economy as a whole. They had ceded control of that to the Fed.

This sudden shift in power didn't change relations between Washington politicos and the Federal Reserve right away. The Reagan and Bush administrations alternately courted and berated the Fed. The change was

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that, when the politicos complained, they did so from a position of sheer impotence. For instance, in 1991 the economy went into a recession. In the past, the president would have drawn up a bold plan to reinvigorate consumer demand with new tax cuts or spending. But the budget deficit, then bulging close to $300 billion, foreclosed that option. So, instead, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady railed at Greenspan for failing to cut interest rates quickly enough, and, at one point, even boycotted their weekly meeting. Superficially, it looked like the old pattern of discord between the unelected central banker and the elected president's administration. Yet the dynamic was crucially different. Unlike the past, Brady's grievance was an expression not of defiance but of utter, helpless desperation.

Then, in 1993, Bill Clinton took office, planning a package of new spending programs to stimulate the economy. He soon discovered that any effort to goose the economy this way would prove futile. Any deficit spending would shake the confidence of Greenspan and Wall Street, causing interest rates to rise, slowing the economy, and thus counteracting the stimulative effect of more spending. And so Clinton decided to make cooperation with Greenspan the basis of his economic program. The symbolic apogee of this collaboration came in February 1993, during Clinton's first State of the Union address, when Hillary Clinton invited Greenspan to sit next to her in the House gallery. Financial pages were filled with accounts of the close relationship between Clinton's Treasury Department and Greenspan, and indeed it represented something new. Instead of baying at the moon, the president had reconciled himself to his own ineffectuality.

The importance of this is not simply that the Federal Reserve wields more influence over the White House's decisions than it ever has in the past. On a deeper level, Clinton's embrace has consecrated Greenspan's exalted status. The presidency no longer counterbalances or even criticizes the Fed. This absence of opposition cleanses Greenspan of any taint of earthly politics and reinforces the aura of pristine sanctity that surrounds him.

In the Washington sensibility, disparaging the Fed is considered uncouth, regardless of the substance of the critique. Such a transgression even has its own name, "Fed-bashing," an accusation that carries a vague connotation of loutishness and ignorance. This taboo has its origins in the fact that populists historically have challenged the Fed's existence. They argued that essentially political decisions about inflation and unemployment should not rest with unelected bankers. Various presidents throughout history have taken up some version of this notion, mainly because they wanted the Fed to put the political needs of the administration—fast growth during election years—ahead of independent economic judgment.

Partly because it was championed by populist radicals and obviously self-interested politicians, and partly because of its shaky merits, the anti-Fed argument has fallen into disrepute. But defenders of the Fed's independence—which is to say, nearly everyone—still consider the institution embattled by hostile plebeian hordes. Hence, they interpret criticism of any specific Fed decision as an assault upon the institution's integrity. Defending the Fed against such attacks is a mark of sophistication. And the truly erudite understand not only the need for a strong Fed, but also the particular importance and genius of Alan Greenspan.

It is mid-February, and Senator Joseph Biden is nearly quaking in the presence of Greenspan, who has come before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to endorse a contribution to the International Monetary Fund. The contribution would cost $18 billion, but Biden nervously keeps saying $18 *million*, a sum so paltry that the assembled panelists could probably donate the money themselves instead of pestering Congress for an appropriation.

"Chairman Greenspan," Biden says, "as I see it, the key to your job, and you've done it incredibly well, is maintaining confidence in a stable and predictable monetary policy." Having established his subservience, Biden then beseeches Greenspan to explain "what Keynes called the animal spirits of investors in this process, and how what we do here in terms of funding the IMF can influence these intangible things." Greenspan replies that Asian investors need confidence and that restoring their economies will build that confidence. It does not require years of central-banking experience or even a semester of Econ 101 to grasp this near-tautology, but Biden is blown away nevertheless. "It may be very presumptuous of me," he answers softly, "to say I think that's a brilliant response."

Basking in Greenspan's brilliance has become a cherished congressional ritual. Later that month, the Fed chairman testifies before the Senate Banking Committee, as he does twice a year. The assembled senators seem more inclined to compliment than to query their guest, but, since this is a hearing, they must ask him questions. And so they do. The topics include the Japanese economy, paying off the national debt, and privatizing Social Security. Senator Robert Bennett asks about the year 2000 computer bug, even soliciting Greenspan's appraisal of the senator's own pet solution. Bennett wants all the Europeans who are working on unifying their currencies to put that on hold and devote their efforts to the millennium problem. (Bennett does not say exactly how Greenspan should go about commandeering a large chunk of the European labor force.)

Only one senator asks Greenspan about monetary policy. Everybody else carefully avoids the topic, as if it were not their place to tell him how to do his job. Yet that is the entire reason these hearings exist in the first place. In 1978, Congress mandated that the Fed chairman testify twice a year precisely so that he could be held publicly accountable for his monetary policies. Congress traditionally took the opportunity to grill the Fed chairman; it was even thought to be an important

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democratic constraint on the unelected chairman's power. These days, that's regarded as presumptuous, even downright rude.

Instead, Greenspan's testimony now serves an entirely different purpose. Members of Congress use Greenspan's appearances as a way of soliciting his benediction for their own proposals. Greenspan's oracular status is such that a good word from him can give a garden-variety partisan policy idea the glossy imprimatur of Economic Genius. In this way, Greenspan wields influence even beyond his vast nominal powers as Fed chairman. "He's become the national economic guru on everything," observes Alan Blinder, Greenspan's former vice chairman.

Yet, while Greenspan's pronouncements carry the gravity of received wisdom, they generally amount to nothing more profound than op-edish opinions, informed mainly by his own ideological conservatism. During a recent hearing before the House Banking Committee, for instance, Greenspan intoned that proper uses for the budget surplus include tax cuts and debt reduction but not increased spending. This sort of question has very little to do with economic data and a lot to do with whether one is more intent on helping taxpayers or recipients of government spending.

Greenspan's credibility on these issues, of course, reflects his good standing as an economic virgin, untainted by thoughts of fleshly politics. But his edicts often carry a whiff of expediency. Two years ago, for example, Greenspan lent his prestige to a campaign to change the Consumer Price Index, which measures inflation. Greenspan and his allies argued that the index overstated the true rate of inflation, which would mean that inflation is actually lower than we think it is. Since the federal government ties its Social Security payments to the inflation rate, adjusting the index would mean lower Social Security payments, a result that would fit in with many of Greenspan's long-held beliefs.

The problem is, at the same time he was criticizing the Consumer Price Index, Greenspan had also been basing his monetary decisions upon it. Greenspan nearly doubled interest rates in 1994 to suppress inflation. But, if Greenspan was right about the index, then inflation was lower than he had claimed all along. He was telling people he wanted, say, three percent inflation, but in fact he really wanted inflation to be half as large as that. If he really meant it about the Consumer Price Index, then, in a sense, he had been misleading the public for years.

And it wouldn't have been the first time Greenspan's wisdom proved less than divine. In 1980, when Ronald Reagan divulged his plan to cut taxes, boost defense spending, and balance the budget, the candidate trotted out Greenspan to quell any accusations of voodoo economics. "This is an exercise in reasonable budget making," said Greenspan, then a well-respected economics consultant earning a living in the private sector. And also: "To argue that Governor Reagan's program is irresponsible is nonsensical."

In 1984, Charles Keating hired Greenspan to examine Lincoln Savings and Loan. Greenspan did, and he then urged Congress to grant Lincoln and other S&Ls a legal exemption that would allow it to make riskier investments. Keating, he wrote, "is seasoned and expert in selecting and making direct investments" and "has a long and continuous track record of outstanding success in making sound and profitable direct investments." Greenspan's prestigious endorsement helped Keating win over Congress.

One might suppose that his bit parts in the two greatest economic fiascoes of the last two decades—the huge deficits of the 1980s and the savings-and-loan debacle—would dull Greenspan's luster at least a bit. Instead, he faces ever more pleas to oraculate.

Back at the Senate hearing, as Greenspan's testimony winds down, the senators begin reproaching one another for having ever questioned Greenspan in the past. Before anyone can point the finger at him, Senator Al D'Amato of New York blurts out sheepishly, "I have to do my mea culpa, you know, publicly here."

Having confessed, D'Amato demonstrates that he has truly purged any doubts from his mind. "Mr. Chairman," D'Amato concludes, "let me thank you for your graciousness, for your incisiveness, for your responsiveness, not only today, but the manner in which you have continually held yourself and those of your colleagues, made yourselves available to this committee and to its members and staff. We are deeply appreciative."

D'Amato's expression of gratitude would seem more than sufficient, given that Greenspan's appearance is, after all, a legal requirement. But the senator continues on: "So we are deeply appreciative. And, again, we are well aware, as Senator Bennett has spelled out, that your stewardship has played a most significant role in the economic prosperity that we enjoy. And we want to commend you and again thank you for your leadership and for holding yourself available to this committee and to the American people in the manner in which you have." And, in summary: "We are deeply appreciative."

As the hearing breaks up, a smattering of Greenspan groupies descends upon the chairman. A pair of high school cheerleaders ask Greenspan to autograph copies of his testimony. A young woman who works at the Department of Health and Human Services snatches up his name card from the witness table; she wants to post it on her office wall as a souvenir of the two-hour testimony she has just enjoyed. "He's amazing.... I'm totally devoted to him," she explains later. "Without him, where would the economy be?" She seems stupefied that such a question might require answering. "What do you mean?" she asks. "Everybody knows it would be bad."

D'Amato, meanwhile, apparently still feels that he has not adequately conveyed the deep sincerity of his reverence for the chairman. Approaching Greenspan, he coos: "I really meant what I said." •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Love Later On

Brigitte Roüan, who is in her 40s, makes an explosive debut. This isn't literally accurate, but it's effectually true. Roüan, a French actress, screenwriter, director, has appeared in numerous films, none of which did much for her—in this country, anyway. She wrote and directed *Overseas* (1990) and was in it, a film that (as I recall) had some sensitivity but small impact. Now Roüan has written and directed and played the leading role in **Post Coitum** (New Yorker) and establishes herself as a significant artist.

"Post coitum animal tristesse," the saw derived from Ovid, was the full title of the film in Europe, but this particular "animal" is far from *triste*: after coitus, she's even more inflamed with passion. Roüan plays Diane, an editor in a Paris publishing house, satisfactorily married, with two teenage children. Through a young novelist, she meets his friend Emilio, and it's spontaneous combustion. Emilio is in his late 20s, in Paris on a break from his humanitarian work abroad, and he and Diane ignite.

Her husband, Philippe, is a lawyer, patient, exceptionally likable, who subsequently learns of the affair by accident, then does nothing about it. Apparently he doesn't know exactly what to do. He feels almost as much compassion for his desperate wife as he feels hurt. Besides, Philippe is engaged on a case that has minatory overtones of his own situation.

Downstairs in their apartment house lived Madame LePluche and her husband, in their 60s. One day, while serving dinner and humming "The Blue Danube," she shoved the serving fork into his neck. Quite calm when the police took her away, she named Philippe as her lawyer. He learns of Madame's restraint through 43 years of her husband's philandering: the killing occurred when he asked her for a divorce. Segments of her subsequent story interweave with the life that Philippe is living these days, as a suggestion of the possible extreme, grotesque outcome of conventional behavior in his situation.

Except for this oddly contrapuntal LePluche strand, the story of *Post Coitum* could hardly be more familiar. A mature woman is overwhelmed by a young man, falls desperately in love, then finds that his view of things is not hers. But the very triteness of the story emphasizes how exceptional the film is, because Roüan has fixed on verity rather than novelty—the agon of a woman's discovery that passion, almost feral in fury, can lurk within the best-ordered life, waiting to pounce. Films in general have conditioned us to expect plot twists, as well as credible characters. Roüan is chiefly interested in Diane, in conveying the woman's surprise and ache.

Roüan's writing, as far as can be judged from subtitles, is pointed and vital. Her performance is superb. Petite, dark-haired, with a fine carved-ivory face, she drives the film with heat and anguish and even some wry humor. Diane (like Roüan) knows the triteness of her situation; she also realizes that knowing it is no defense. Scene after scene with Emilio, even some solo scenes where she is longing for him, are plunges into sheer sexuality. Not that there's much explicit sex: those scenes are about possession, *being* possessed. Then we remember that Roüan herself directed those scenes in which she required herself to reach Dionysiac heights, and our wonder grows.

Throughout, her directing is mostly lithe and fluent. (Exceptions: some figurative stuff with a cat at the start and some brief scenes that are shot in red.) There are plentiful subtle touches: for instance, when Madame LePluche is led down a grim corridor in a woman's prison, we hear a baby crying, which evokes an image of this prison's female population. Roüan has cast her film exquisitely. Boris Terral, as Emilio, is attractive and stormy. Patrick Chesnais, as Philippe, is immediately endearing. Nils Tavernier, the son of the director Bertrand Tavernier, plays the novelist with the right moody solipsism. Françoise Arnoul, once an ornament of Renoir films and now in her comfy 60s, gives philosophic calm to Madame LePluche. Jean-Louis Richard, veteran actor-director who currently weighs in at about 220, makes all the pounds work for him as Diane's boss.

The ending of the film is somewhat neat, but at least it leaves us wishing that it could be true. This is a tribute to the excellence with which Roüan has done her three jobs in the film. We must hope that this late "debut" is a promise of much more to come.

Twilight (Paramount) is indeed crepuscular. Robert Benton, who directed and cowrote it (with Richard Russo), clearly wanted to strike a blow for his film generation in this era of teenage pleasurings. So he devised a film to star Paul Newman

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Amistad. *Steven Spielberg's excellently made, if factually compressed, account of an 1839 slave rebellion. Memorable. (Reviewed 12/22/97)* **Men with Guns.** *John Sayles investigates Latin American political horror via a physician's odyssey through the interior of his country. Except for the symbolic finish, a gripping work. (3/23/98)* **The Sweet Hereafter.** *A hushed but poignant drama of a small town that loses many children in a school bus crash. Ian Holm figures as a lawyer come to help. (12/8/97)* **Wag the Dog.** *Tired of Monica Lewinsky? Try a fictional antecedent, more unabashedly funny. (2/2/98)* **—SK**

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and Gene Hackman and James Garner and (much younger but still not young) Susan Sarandon. In 1977, Benton did *The Late Show*, with Art Carney as an aging private eye who gets in trouble. This time Newman is the private eye, retired, who gets in trouble.

After a brief prologue in Mexico, the film takes place in Hollywood and environs. The chief setting is the mansion of Hackman, a former movie figure, and his wife, Sarandon, an ex-star. Newman, an old friend, lives over the garage. Asked by Hackman to deliver an envelope to a mysterious woman, Newman steps into a mess, in which he meets two old acquaintances, James Garner, another retired cop, and Stockard Channing, a former lover, still a cop.

The plot winds along, much like watching one of those TV chefs prepare a dish, a touch of this stock ingredient, a dash of that, including sex of course. But Benton never had any real purpose in mind other than to fling this geriatric gauntlet in the face of contemporary youth worship. Benton and Russo's screenplay has a lot of dialogue that is laboriously smart, and it leans heavily on mystery-novel characterization—that is, one character tic for each person. Example: a parole officer, when fatally shot, mumbles something about lifelong bad luck before expiring. The clever camera work of Piotr Sobocinski discloses a basic itch—to make a film noir in color: he ingeniously swathes some garish scenes in deep shadow.

Newman, now 73, is so welcome on the screen that we wish it were possible to give him a hug. He does perfectly all that he is asked to do, but aside from the fact that it's pleasant to watch Newman doing it, the role could have been played by many a less talented man. All the others are as good as they need to be. In the last moment Benton has Channing do something with Newman that is in doubtful taste; but perhaps he wanted to prove that, though he and some of his cast are well along, they are not over the hill. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

Musicals With a Message

Ever since Rodgers and Hammerstein first lectured us about racial tolerance in *South Pacific* with a lyric called "You've Got to Be Taught," the American musical has often felt obliged to display a benevolent social purpose, while Broadway audiences have been conditioned to pay for their pleasures with the coin of white guilt. Put this down to our Puritan inheritance. It's an old custom for churchgoers to listen to sermons on Sunday morning after visiting the whorehouse on Saturday night—a weekend ritual that may have inspired the Broadway tradition of mixing moral righteousness with musical entertainment. Message musicals are also a way of allowing producers and investors to feel sanctimonious while making pots of money.

Ragtime and *The Capeman* are good examples of the way Broadway continues to merge the sacred and the profane. All of the considerable resources of the commercial theater have gone into creating *Ragtime*. Based on E. L. Doctorow's powerful novel, it has been adapted for the stage by Terrence McNally, a very shrewd Broadway playwright. It has been driven by the epic imagination of a very gifted director, Frank Galati. It has been designed by some of the most brilliant visual artists in the business—Eugene Lee (sets), Santo Loquasto (costumes), Jules Fisher and Peggy Eisenhauer (lights), and Wendall K. Harrington (projections). And it is being sung and acted by an excellent cast, particularly Marin Mazzie as Mother, Peter Friedman as Tateh, and Brian Stokes Mitchell as Coalhouse Walker Jr.

All of this promises us a musical of genuine distinction. What we often get instead is a self-congratulatory waxworks. Doctorow's kaleidoscopic novel roamed freely and broadly over the most colorful figures of the early years of the twentieth century: Emma Goldman, Harry Houdini, Evelyn Nesbitt and Harry Thaw and Stanford White, Henry Ford, Booker T. Washington, and Sigmund Freud (one of the few Doctorow celebrities missing from the musical). And while the novel took considerable liberties with historical fact, it compensated with an inventive writer's notions of how such figures might have behaved under imaginary circumstances. In the musical, the historical characters exist only to flesh out an anorexic narrative line. In the novel, they are people; in the

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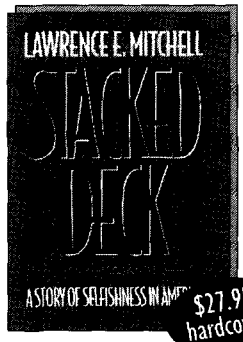

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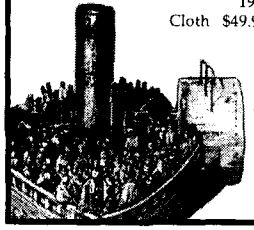

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Ferrotype

My great-grandparents are both twenty-one.
This is their honeymoon. They sit in front
of a pasteboard screen of Niagara Falls
painted in aniline blues and greens.

Unnecessary props—plaster columns, draperies
and wax flowers—have been pushed aside.
He leans his elbow on the false balustrade,
restless in his dark suit, one leg extended,

One hand hidden behind her back.
Both of them frown at the camera.
He has not even taken off his hat
to balance it on his knee. Perhaps

he is already thinking of leaving.
Inverted in the viewing glass her white dress
wavers in and out of focus. The photographer
bends above his box and pleated bellows,

a black cloth over his head.
He tends the image carefully, as if
it is a lantern he is trying to keep
alight. This far north the sun sets early.

Beyond the glass wall of the studio
it is already night. The photographer lifts
his hand to bid them to be still. He lights
the touch paper. The shutter clicks.

Magnesium flashes with the power of
twelve hundred candles. As the column
of white smoke settles, the room fills
with a fine metallic powder. Their faces are

both silvered over. This is the only photograph
of them together. They do not move or speak.
Outside each second nine thousand tons of water
fall through the full dark of the last century.

KAREN DRAYNE

musical, only silhouettes. Little is left of Doctorow's broad panoramic view of America except his liberal pieties.

Like the novel, the musical splits up into three worlds: the world of Father, a rich Gentile explorer from New Rochelle; the world of Tateh, a Jewish socialist from Latvia; and the world of Coalhouse Walker Jr., a black New York musician who impregnates one of Father's servants. Doctorow based Coalhouse Walker on Heinrich von Kleist's Michael Kolhaus, a German horse trader who became a symbol for unequal treatment under the law. After Coalhouse is accosted by some racist volunteer firemen, who vandalize his new car, and after Sarah, the mother of his child, dies in the act of seeking justice for him, Coalhouse turns terrorist and arsonist and occupies the Morgan Library. He is joined by a number of black followers in beige dusters and by Father's Younger Brother (an idealist ashamed of his race who "would shed this skin if I could stand with you and fight"). Eventually, they agree to evacuate the library; Coalhouse is gunned down following his surrender. Younger Brother joins Zapata in Mexico.

In *Ragtime*, Doctorow was trying to write the history of social diversification in America and to predict its looming racial tensions. The musical tries to be faithful to this purpose, but as a form it is simply not equipped to provide depth and width at the same time. Stephen Flaherty's music and Lynn Ahrens's lyrics take their inspiration from the title. But aside from the opening number (called "Ragtime"), which is hammered rather insistently, the songs are not especially distinguished. McNally's book is faithful enough to the novel, but without Doctorow's rich abundance of detail, the plot seems overly schematic. And the ending—where Tateh marries Mother after Father dies, and they both adopt Sarah's black child—ends up looking like an artificial compression of its racial themes.

Frank Galati has already demonstrated his gift for creating Americana in his production of *The Grapes of Wrath*. In *Ragtime*, he provides a number of deft nostalgic touches—particularly in the opening number, when a child looking through a stereopticon conjures up the entire cast in sepia. But too much of the acting takes the form of the declaratory barking that Broadway often uses to bridge musical numbers. Also, too much of the writing confirms the audience's previously held convictions. This musical version of *Ragtime* looks a lot like *Bloomer Girl* with a social conscience.

The Capeman looks like Jack the Ripper with a social conscience. The career of Salvador Agrón, the Puerto Rican teenager who stabbed two innocent kids during a rumble and then bragged that his mother could watch him burn, would hardly seem to be inviting material for a Broadway musical. But Paul Simon apparently saw enough redemptive significance in Agrón's life to turn him into a musical martyr.

To flesh out his concept, Simon enlisted Derek Walcott's help with the book and lyrics, and Mark Morris (and later Jerry Zaks) to stage the production. None of these able people has been able to bring this dismal story to life. Neither Simon nor Walcott seem capable of creating a persuasive narrative line or even a decent lyric. ("Life is an ocean of endless tears" is fairly typical of the soggy sentiments.) The musical is bare of dance or even interesting movement, which is pretty surprising considering the participation of Morris. And with the exception of a couple of decent salsa numbers, the score has a rhythmic monotony about it that will depress Simon's fans. (All of the songs sound better sung by the composer on the CD.)

In conception, *The Capeman* borrows heavily from *Evita* and *West Side Story*. From Andrew Lloyd Webber, Simon and Walcott take the device of a sideline commentator—in this case, the oldest of the three actors playing Agrón (Ruben Blades, performing the part in a coma). Like Che, he offers sardonic asides as the action proceeds. And from *West Side Story*, the authors borrow the local barrio color, the staged rumbles, and the notion that juvenile delinquents

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are "depraved on account of we're deprived."

You probably recognize that phrase from Stephen Sondheim's lyrics for "Officer Krupke." Sondheim was intending to be ironic. In *The Capeman*, Simon says the same thing with a perfectly straight face. He asks us to believe that Agrón turned murderer not because of his nature but because of his nurture (or the lack of it)—because his father deserted his mother, because his stepfather disapproved of him, and especially because of a general prejudice against Latinos. Anyway, the killings were really a revolutionary act: "We share a history, the white man broke our nation.... The barrio is just another reservation. But the revolution is coming fast."

In short, Salvador Agrón may have stabbed a couple of innocent kids, but he was basically a misunderstood sweetie. More, he was a Jesus of the Barrio who took the rap for everybody else and bore their sins: "I am an innocent man," he cries, "and I paid you with my life." If Agrón is innocent, then white society is guilty, obviously. "The world goes crazy for Latino blood," he sings, "when a white boy dies." After serving time in a number of prisons, he is released; returns home to his mother (whose hair has turned quite gold from grief); and, finally, "a ghost wandering in the neighborhood," dies of a heart attack at the age of 43.

In his time, Paul Simon has written some tender songs about love, divorce, parenthood, and similar matters of domestic life. But his muse shrinks before the enormity of evil. *The Capeman* is Radical Chic, vintage 1998. Apart from Bob Crowley's remarkable forced perspective settings, the show (which, it has just been announced, will close in a few weeks) is simply not *auténtica*. In fact, the only moments in the show that seem convincing are the old newsreels in which the historical Agrón, sneering at the camera, tells an interviewer who asks him how he feels about the murders, "I feel like killing you." All right, what next? A musical exploration of the tormented life of Jeffrey Dahmer?

On a recent trip to South Africa, I found a wonderful antidote to the dyspepsia I get from American guilt musicals. It was an all-black version of *La Bohème*. Entitled *La Bohème Noir* and performed at the Nico Theatre Center in Capetown, this was a truly splendid rendering of Puccini's opera, subtly adapted to suit the circumstances of South African blacks under apartheid. The Nico Theatre Center was formerly a segregated cultural complex. Many whites boycotted it until Mandela became President and integrated everything. A lot of ANC cultural funds have been poured into the making of this opera. But although the conductor and the principals (wonderful singers all) were black, the audience was almost entirely white.

La Bohème Noir is set not in Paris but in Soweto, where the characters are suffering both from poverty and from oppression. Rudolfo has undergone a transformation from poet to playwright (he burns one of his plays to protect himself from the cold) and Mimi is now a domestic servant. Aside from a number of topical and geographical references, however, the libretto is essentially left intact. What have changed—and radically—are the social circumstances.

In the third act, for example, Mimi and other domestics are waiting for a bus in front of metal fences, shacks, and shabeens ("We have to go to work; we are the cleaners"). They are accosted by menacing Afrikaner police who shine flashlights in people's faces and rudely examine identity papers. The police pick out a suspect and haul him off for questioning, the kind of action that raises the stakes of the opera considerably. In Puccini, the bohemians have little to think about but love, jealousy, and their next meal. Here, they are awaiting liberation not just from starvation, but also from enslavement. "This is Republic Day in Soweto," goes one chorus, "where children's voices sing a new libretto." "What can we do for the struggle?" asks Rudolfo. Paint and write, comes the answer.

La Bohème Noir reminded me a little of those American musicals of the 1930s and '40s—period pieces such as *The Hot Mikado* and *Carmen Jones*—where all-black casts performed in shows originally written for and by whites, without the slightest hint of self-consciousness or resentment. What was striking then, and now, was not just the robust talent but the exuberant good nature of the participants. The entire cast contributed to a highly charged evening of opera, beautifully conducted and powerfully sung. Oddly enough, this version, though freely adapted, managed to rescue the opera from divas, dress suits, and champagne suppers, and restore some of its original energies. Poverty for these characters is not simply a question of choice or lifestyle, as in, say, *Rent*. Nor are oppression and racism stimuli for cheap sentiment. No, they are grinding realities in a culture which, instead of wallowing in a guilty past, is seeking to improve the future. •

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Muck Funnel

By James Wood

Birthday Letters by Ted Hughes

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 198 pp., $20)

> One misses the art of idealization in Bürger most when he describes feelings; this reproach is directed particularly at the more recent poems, addressed mainly to Molly....
>
> —Schiller, "On Bürger's poems"

Ted Hughes's poems are bullied almanacs, in which the natural world is forced through a calendar of dark myth and astrological glower. The pike, the stillborn lamb, the aborted piglet, the thistles that are as vengeful as Vikings, the otter that existed "before wars or burials," the jaguar that is "like a thick Aztec disemboweller": these exist in a Manichean world, in which "Life is trying to be life" but "Death also is trying to be life." This notion of death is entirely unmetaphysical; it is a premoral struggle; and this may be partly why Hughes's poems most appeal to adolescents, deep in their eclipses of reason. This verse is accusatory. The metaphors of Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath are threats. They challenge the world *not* to be like this.

Here are more animal poems. For the Sylvia Plath who is the subject of *Birthday Letters* is little different from one of Hughes's lambs or otters. She wriggles through a hostile element. She swims back to that estuary which has waited for her from the beginning, the pool of Death. Hughes, the massive farmer, watches this natural progress horoscopically. It was carved in the stars: "That day the solar system married us/ Whether we knew it or not." The poems stream with omens. In Boston, the young Hughes rescues a bat which has fallen from a tree. But he can do so only by giving the bat (i.e. Plath) his finger to hold onto, letting "the bite lock":

> How could Fate
> Stage a scenario so
> symbolic
> Without having secreted
> the tragedy ending
> And the ironic death?
> It confirmed
> The myth we have sleep-
> walked into: death.
>
> This was the bat-light we
> were living in: death.

Of course, it is not Fate that stages these bitter dramas, but the poet, who chooses to write them up. The aura of predestination is certainly this book's strongest texture. The poems find different ways to accuse destiny. The Plath of these poems is a suicide-bomb, ticking through a doomed marriage, waiting to make good on the botched attempt that she made as a teenager. (This is sometimes Plath's picture of herself, too, especially in her late verse.) Hughes, who is "Siamese-twinned" to her, can only "sleepwalk" (a verb used several times) toward her death. Sometimes it is Plath's father who is responsible. At other times it is poetry itself ("we/ Only did what poetry told us to do"). But neither poet can do anything about it: "Then the script overtook us."

> I saw that what gripped you, as you sipped,
> Were terrors that had killed you once
> already.
> Now, I see, I saw, sitting, the lonely
> Girl who was going to die.

This appears fairly early in Hughes's book. From about halfway in, the poems begin to spawn with premonitions. "I had not understood / How the death hurtling to and fro / Inside your head, had to alight somewhere." Death and fear, again as in Plath's own poems, are grotesquely anthropomorphized. Death is a panther, or "your Ogre lover." Or death is poetry, which "followed you," "with its blood-sticky feet." Many of Hughes's later poems seem strongly influenced by Plath's last death-heady poems, and some are replies to them:

> This fear was the colour of your desk-top,
> You almost knew its features,
> That grain was like its skin,
> you could stroke it.
> You could taste it in your milky coffee.
> It made a noise like your typewriter.

Poems such as these, by Plath and Hughes, with their luxurious menus of likenesses, in which death is granted a domestic animism, are rarely affecting; and they are often comic, precisely because they seem theoretically limitless. Such poems could continue for volumes, as the poet sees the poltergeist of death inhabiting one object after another. If fear is in Plath's "milky coffee" and sounds like her typewriter, then why not in her seat-cushion or toilet-cistern or cake-tin? The unwitting comedy, which sometimes achieves a conscious irony in Plath's late verse, lies in the fertility, even the jauntiness, of the poet's noticings. Death may be closing in, but the damned poem is unstoppable.

Once Plath gives birth to her two children (to whom this book is dedicated), destiny is fortified by the emergence of new potential sacrifices. Hughes seems to imply that the birth of children is like adding prompters to Fate's script. The gods had to be appeased. Now the two poets become "puppets" in a "Fable." When Hughes is first tempted by Assia Wevill, the woman for whom he left Plath, he writes: "She was helpless too. / None of us could wake up." In the book's angriest poem, "Suttee," a piece of astonishingly poor taste, Hughes plays on the idea of Plath as a mother who gave birth, not to children, but to the evil baby of her own fragile survival from her teenaged suicide attempt. Like a good father, Hughes must look after, not his children, but the death-baby that his wife has become. (Again, this kind of recklessness is also to be found in Plath, who likens failed or unwritten poems to aborted fetuses, and in the late poem "Thalidomide" likens her talent to a mutilated child.)

> In the myth of your first
> death our deity
> Was yourself resurrected.
> Yourself reborn.
> The holy one.
> Day in day out that was
> our worship—
> Tending the white birth-
> bed of your rebirth,
> The unforthcoming delivery,
> the all-but-born,
> The ought-by-now-to-be-born.
>
> We were patient.
> The gruelling prolongueur of your
> labour-pangs
> Gave our dedication altitude...
> I was midwife.

"Suttee" should remind us, if we were in any doubt, that this is a book of anger and vengeance and grief. Retribution and self-justification are inherent in this enterprise. I do not believe that Hughes, as an editor of Plath's work, "silenced" her; quite the opposite. But *Birthday Letters* must amount to a kind of silencing, because it is like listening to one half of a

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telephone call. (Both poets have written hysterical poems against the telephone. For Hughes, in "Do not Pick up the Telephone," it is a "plastic crab," a "plastic Buddha" that "jars out a Karate screech"; for Plath, in "Words heard, by accident, over the phone," it is "Muck funnel, muck funnel....")

More drastically, it is hard to ignore Hughes's bitterness. His poems are little epidemics of blame. This book is really a hysteric's progress, recorded by a husband who was not hysterical enough to comprehend his wife. This is how Hughes himself puts it: "Your gushy burblings—which I decoded / Into a language, utterly new to me / With conjectural, hopelessly wrong meaning." Any reader of Plath's *Letters Home* will be likely to concede the justice of Hughes's complaint. Plath gushed, was a veritable hydrant.

But it is unpleasant, as well as oddly boring, to have to endure the husband's repetitious version, especially when the husband is wont to praise himself for his hard, dry-eyed, unhysterical European vision. In Paris, for instance, where the couple stopped en route to their honeymoon in Spain, Plath was full of her American idea ("Fitzgerald, Henry Miller, Gertrude Stein"), while Hughes was more realistic:

> My Paris was a post-war utility survivor,
> The stink of fear still hanging in the wardrobes,
> *Collaborateurs* barely out of their twenties....

But for Plath, "all that / Was the anecdotal aesthetic touch / On Picasso's portrait / Of Apollinaire...." In Spain, it is a similar tale. The American flees from realities. "Spain frightened you. Spain / Where I felt at home ... your panic / Clutched back towards college America." In Hughes's vision, Plath is sometimes the spoiled American college-kid, spoiled with illusions and luggage: "Your shorts, your short-sleeved jumper—/ One of the thirty I lugged around Europe." Hughes struggles to soften England's postwar harshness, to make Plath—"Homesick, exhausted, disappointed, pregnant"—feel at home. But even an English beach is drab by comparison with the Cape Cod of Plath's childhood, a place of light and American money: "The slew of horse-shoe crabs / And sand-dollars."

When, in "The Rabbit Catcher," Plath comes across a set trap, she is appalled; but Hughes, in grim unison with nature's *danse macabre*, sees her as merely sentimental. Plath throws the trap into the woods:

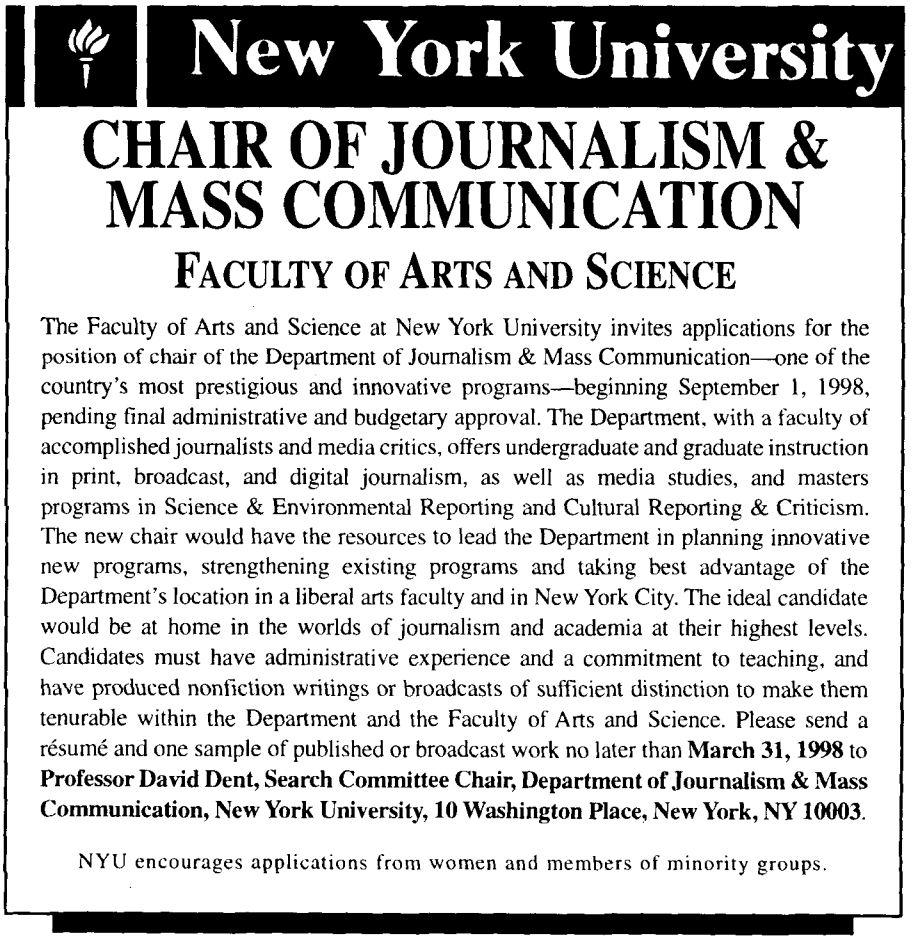
> I was aghast. Faithful
> To my country gods—I saw
> The sanctity of a trapline desecrated.
> You saw blunt fingers, blood in the cuticles,
> Clamped round a blue mug. I saw
> Country poverty raising a penny.
> Filling a Sunday stewpot. You saw baby-eyed
> Strangled innocents, I saw sacred
> Ancient custom.

Hughes is calm, antique England to Plath's excitable American innocence. Hughes is like the pool into which he looks in his poem "Pike": "Stilled legendary depth: / It was as deep as England." His only desire is to act as "midwife" to Plath's sanity: "A house of our own / Answering all your problems was the answer / To all my problems."

As the book advances, the turbulence of Plath's hysteria grows: "Your dreams were of a sea clogged with corpses,/ Death camp atrocities, mass amputations." Plath is "Inaccessible / In your dybbuk fury." "Each night you descended again / Into the temple-crypt." The reader's uneasiness has less to do with the veracity of Hughes's picture than with its reliance on an intimacy unsecured by literary means. These poems are bandages torn off a marriage and tossed to us. Very few of them seem free-standing poems, capable of surviving the decomposition of posterity.

Our only literary question should be whether Hughes succeeds in evoking his subject. The answer is, only rarely; and for several reasons. One is that Plath has become a celebrity to Hughes as well as to his readers. We were all married to her. Thus it is that although these poems abound in the acutest intimacies, Hughes makes little effort to transmit them to us as if they were intimacies, as if they needed the hard literary work of expansion, aeration, and universalization. Instead, they have been broken up by our own curiosity, and Hughes clearly feels this. In some sense these details are no longer private to him, and he cannot animate them for a public that has already spun them around and around. This explains why *Birthday Letters* manages the extraordinary feat of devoting almost 200 pages to Sylvia Plath, and providing almost nothing original or refreshed about her.

Of course, Hughes is a participant in the events that are no longer privately his; and his participation is another reason for the book's failure to evoke its subject. Schiller warned against the poet's self-entrapment in his essay on the folk poet Bürger: "An angry actor will hardly seem to us a noble representer of indignation; let a poet take good care not to sing of pain in the midst of pain. To the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extent that the poet himself is merely a suffering party, his feeling must inevitably sink from its ideal generality to an imperfect individuality." An imperfect individuality is exactly what taints some of these poems. They are too often contaminated by the very hysteria that Hughes imputes to Plath.

This occurs most offensively in "Dreamers," in which Hughes sees the Jewish Assia Wevill as if through Plath's manic eyes, as a Nazi avenger, come to snatch Plath's children:

> Black Forest wolf,
> a witch's daughter....
> Her speech Harrod's,
> Hitler's mutilations
> Kept you company,
> weeding the onions.
> An ex-Nazi Youth Sabra.
> Her father
> Doctor to the Bolshoi
> Ballet.
> ...
> She sat there, in her
> soot-wet mascara,
> In flame-orange silks,
> in gold bracelets,
> Slightly filthy with erotic
> mystery—
> A German
> Russian Israeli with the
> gaze of a demon....

Hughes's language is here lavishly collusive with the language of Plath's last poems. "Dreamers" is not an account, but a product, of hysteria.

This collusion has its revenge in "The God," when Hughes attempts to separate himself from the superstitions that he ascribes to Plath, and fails. In that poem, Hughes tells the story of Plath's painful relation to writing. Plath, he says, was "like a religious fanatic / Without a god—unable to pray." Plath wanted to be a writer, and offered her poems to the god of writing: "You offered him verses.... Oblations to an absence. / Little sacrifices." Gradually, says Hughes, this god of writing became the idol that Plath worshipped:

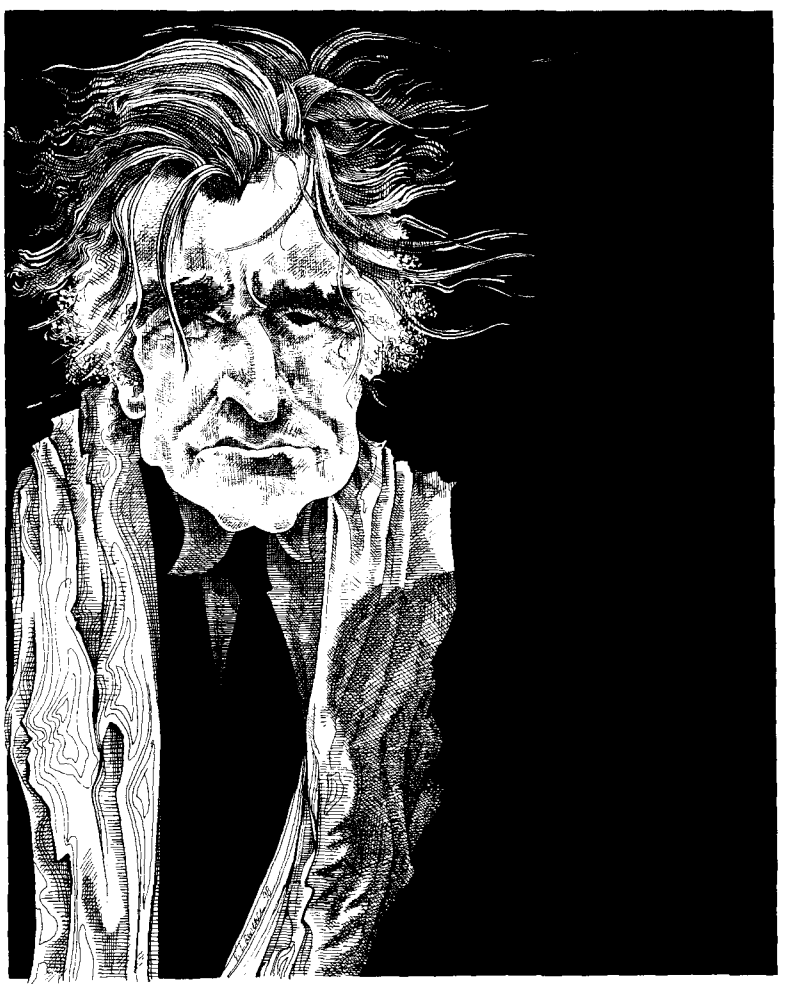
> Your silent howl through the night
> Had made itself a moon, a fiery idol
> Of your God.
> Your crying carried its moon
> Like a woman a dead child. Like a woman
> Nursing a dead child, bending to cool
> Its lips with tear-drops on her fingertip,
> So I nursed you, who nursed a moon
> That was human but dead, withered, and
> Burned you like a lump of phosphorus.

Set aside, for the moment, the intellectual proximity of this to *Rosemary's Baby*. It is necessary first of all to scrutinize the scene. Plath has created a writing-god who is dead. She nurses it like a dead child. But Hughes in turn nurses Plath, as if he, Hughes, were a woman nursing a dead child. In this poem, Hughes is clearly implying that until Plath found the great subject of her own morbidity, in her last few months, she had no real subject. Her god was dead. But in the last few months of her life, the god comes to life, "the child stirred. Its mouth-hole stirred. / Blood oozed at your nipple ... Our happy moment!" Once Plath has her subject, the writing-god is alive. But it demands the blood of both Plath and Hughes: "Two handfuls of blood, your own blood, / And in that blood gobbets of me...." The God revels in its sacrifice: "Your God snuffed up the fatty reek." Once Plath has found her subject, she writes "in a fury, weeping."

So far in the poem, Hughes has presented himself as the nurse who coaxes the dead baby of Plath's talent into life, and then as the suffering husband whose blood is sucked by that very talent. Finally he attempts to separate himself from this doom:

> "God is speaking through me,"
> you told me.
> "Don't say that," I cried. "Don't say that.
> That is horribly unlucky!"

But the poet who rebukes Plath for speaking in this way is the poet who likened himself to a woman nursing a dead baby, whose only representation of the poetic calling is of a god who sucks blood from Plath's nipple, who in the entire length of this book does not really see Plath's poetry differently, who himself gnashes on pagan luridities—and *this* poet dares to chide his wife for saying that God is speaking through her!



TED HUGHES BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Occasionally a few lines ignite the old Lawrencian Hughes, the poet who sees nature with great strong delicacy. Though his lines are loose and unpressured, his line-breaks are invariably dramatic and good. (Both Plath and Hughes got this talent from Emily Dickinson; their verse, which is frequently end-stopped, reads like Dickinson without her end-of-line dashes.) But his beauties, his lusters, are always of the natural world, and never about Plath:

> November fen-damp haze,
> the river unfurling
> Dark whorls, ferrying
> slender willow yellows

Elsewhere he sees "gloom-rich water." He still has a superb ear for kinesis, for the energy and the surprise of the land. Walking toward the sea, Hughes and Plath "crossed a field and came to the open/Blue push of sea-wind." The language is here like a wind itself, the line break like a cliff. At such moments, one excitedly waits for Hughes's portrait of a woman he loved, as the Shakespeare of the sonnets promised that "Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain / Full charactered with lasting memory."

But Plath is not "full charactered" in this book. Before long, the blood-soaked curtain comes down, and the poet feeds once again on his own paganism. Certain readers, noticing Hughes's fond marriage to Fate, to bravuras of pre-

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destination, have charged him with self-absolution. But Hughes was not responsible for Plath's death, and so he has no need to absolve himself. That is not the problem here. His pagan doom, the suckling gods and bloody crypts, do not absolve, but dissolve. A real, particular Plath disappears, and a real, particular Hughes disappears too, drowned in a sud of images that are borrowed from their own poetry, or borrowed from the most familiar dirty magics. Particularity is secular, and these dank poems show us why. •

News of the Weird

BY IAN BURUMA

The Factory of Facts by Luc Sante

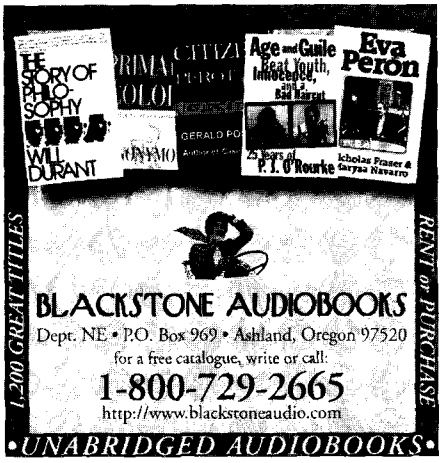
(Pantheon, 306 pp., $24)

Belgium was the place to get through on the annual trek toward the sun. I grew up in Holland, where the sun shines regularly, but not often. So every summer, when the schools were out, a fair chunk of the Dutch population migrated south, to France, Italy, or Spain, to be turned crimson on camping grounds and crowded beaches—crowded, that is, with fellow northern sun-worshippers. Germany was not a popular holiday destination for the Dutch middle class. Our eastern neighbor was a country to be feared, hated, despised, ridiculed, but not enjoyed. All the same, Germany was never to be dismissed. It was Belgium, even smaller and even less significant in the larger scale of things than Holland, that could be safely dismissed.

Yet there was something weird about Belgium, and it never failed to make an impression, even though one drove through the place in a matter of hours. The weirdness began as soon as we crossed the border near Eindhoven. The grandest houses were built right along the motorway, as though their rich owners wished to show off to the motorists. This was pretty strange. And about half an hour into Belgium we would invariably meet an even more peculiar sight. In a village named Geel, we would come upon a procession of grotesque-looking people, staring at us, bug-eyed, like village idiots in a Breugel painting. In fact, they were the unfortunate inmates of a large mental institution in the vicinity. But children are cruel and impressionable; and I still cannot think of Belgium without remembering the road through Geel. Luc Sante's book is full of arresting facts about his native land, but few caught my imagination more than the story of his mother, returning to the old country from the United States, making straight from the Brussels airport to Geel, to worship at the shrine of St. Dymphna, patron saint of nervous disorders. Weird place, Belgium.

Belgium was also the first country that gave me a sense of being abroad. I had been going to England since I was a few months old, on bumpy passages by ferry boat or propeller plane. But England was England, where my mother was born. England wasn't abroad. Belgium was abroad. Abroad, to a Dutch child, means mountains. It was with huge excitement, therefore, that I spied my first mountains, great dark cones, covered in grass and weeds, near the French border at Charleroi. When my parents explained that these were not real mountains, but slag-heaps from the local coal mines, this simply confirmed the weirdness of Belgium: mountains that looked like mountains, but weren't. Things couldn't get much more foreign than that.

It was round about the same time as those first sightings of unreal mountains that I became aware of the United States. My father went there once, on a business trip, and so did one or two of his grander friends. They came back laden with extraordinary treasures, such as customized matchboxes, different brands of chewing gum (I remember only one of them, called Bazooka), pictures of skyscrapers, the latest jazz records, and tales of extraordinary wealth. Just to have been to "the States" lent a person a degree of glamour. For some people it was the only glamour they would ever have. There are stories of Greek emigrants slaving away for years in the kitchens of New Jersey hamburger joints, just to blow all their savings on a flashy car with fins, which they would ship to the old country and drive home to bask in the adoration (or, better still,



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the envy) of family and friends.

Luc Sante appears from his book as someone who lives somewhere in between the old and new worlds: he is a weird Belgian who has made it in the States, but cannot let the old place go. He pops up in trendy New York movies, explaining the mystique of the Belgian waffle. He is a fine American critic, who made his literary reputation as an historian of Manhattan's underbelly. In his latest book, he writes that Flemish painters used to be "defined by the milieu in which they worked," which could be Urbino or Amsterdam. Just so, Sante's writing has been defined by New York. And yet he has hung on to his Belgian passport. His book, a kind of journey through the bric-a-brac of "identity," his own and that of Belgium, helps to explain why.

Sante is not a conventional historian. He is close to the surrealists in temperament. Like them, he is haunted by old photographs and urban landscape. He doesn't focus on the great events that make up official histories, but on the subconscious layers of the past, the ghosts that hover in back streets and shabby rooms, frozen expressions in scratched photographs, the incongruous bits and pieces that turn up, randomly, in markets and the human memory.

Surrealism, as George Melly, the British connoisseur of the movement, described it, was the rebellious child of Victorian romanticism. The surrealist spirit rebels against "the father," and everything he represents: order, patriotism, rationalism, God, and so on. The movement was also a revolt against universal progress—the standardizing, homogenizing, Americanizing tendency of the materialist age that began with machines and still hasn't ended. Surrealists are obsessed by the ephemeral, by flickers of life which reach us as dead fragments: hence their love of photography.

Sante describes a type of photograph that he observed in his grandparents' house, hanging on the wall, between images of saints and fancy crucifixes. They are ancestral portraits, taken in the late nineteenth century, "so heavily retouched they look waxen." They scared him as a child, "and rightly so, because they were death images; given the expense of photography, no one had his or her picture taken until the reaper's scythe could be heard dragging in the dust outside." This is typical of the surrealist spirit. Perhaps it also has a touch of Belgian weirdness. In fact, as Sante explains in some of the best chapters of his book, Belgium is a surrealist country. It certainly produced some of the best surrealist painters, notably Magritte and Delvaux. And they were preceded by a whole line of Flemish and Walloon recorders of the grotesque, stretching from Breugel to James Ensor and Felicien Rops.

Over and over, Sante returns to the theme of Belgian peculiarity. "Belgium," he says, "is an ill-fitting suit of a country. It is stitched together from odds and ends, represents a purely strategic decision on the part of larger powers, has no identity as a nation, and so on." Belgium, he says, "is an accidental country, a nation by default, a haphazard assemblage of dissonant and sometimes warring elements." "To have been born Belgian," he says, "is to have been cast, as if by the zodiac, under the sign of ambivalence." Belgium has only existed as a nation since 1830. One half of the population speaks a dialect of Dutch, and the other half French. Few people speak, or admit to speaking, both. Sante does not know Dutch. This effectively cuts him off from much of his country's literature, which even the snooty Dutch admit is pretty good.

The split identity of Belgium, the lack of national coherence, might or might not explain the attraction of Belgian artists to the surreal and the bizarre. (Sante suggests that provincial boredom might have had something to do with it, too.) But it is ideally suited to Sante's exploration of his own identity as an immigrant. His book, like Belgium, is split into two parts: one focuses on the political and cultural history of Belgium, and more particularly the Walloon part of Belgium, around Verviers, where Sante was born; the other concerns the story of Sante's own life, as a toddler in Verviers, as a "Belgian kid" in New Jersey, as a writer in New York, as a tourist in his own past back in Belgium.

In his account of the national and the personal, Sante operates like an archeologist of memory. Both stories are filled with photographs and bric-a-brac. In fact, Sante obsessively compares his memory to a strip of film: "aged color stock gone to staticky brown." Stories of events don't interest him so much. He is "desperate to *see*, to fall into transient atmospheric sensation." This is what lends photographs their peculiar fascination: the fact that the images are direct reflections of life. Some of Sante's most lengthy descriptions of his parents and other relatives are in fact analyses of photographs. He scrutinizes his own memories as though they were photographs, but he knows that photographs can lie, that they are often composed to achieve an effect.

"I inherited Belgian culture as a package of fragments," he writes. "I had my impressionistic memories—a heap of short strips of film, blurred stills, muffled or corroded sound recordings, waxily unreliable scratch 'n' sniff cards, as well as a box of startlingly efficient emotional triggers." Searching through these fragments, as though trawling a flea market, can produce unexpected gems. Still, there is a risk of solipsistic vagueness in this kind of writing, and Sante does not altogether avoid it. Nothing is more tedious than other people's descriptions of their dreams or their drug trips. Sante's trips down memory lane are interesting, but they are not always interesting enough: "I thought I remembered sitting in a high chair at the kitchen table. The picture was vivid; I saw the calendar on the wall, the stove, the fringed tablecloth. What I couldn't quite figure was the pervasive grayness of the scene. Eventually I realized that I had borrowed the memory from an underlit photograph. . . ." This kind of thing is best left to the afterglow of a good joint.

When there is a concrete story to tell, however, Sante is superb. He has a terrific eye for odd facts and *petites histoires*. In a short economic history of his hometown, Sante informs us that in 1843 a "woman could buy a kippered herring for every two buckets of urine she collected." He also tells us that the rallying cry for nineteenth-century Belgian feminists was "Wyoming!", after the American territory that recognized women's votes in 1860. And the short story of a bogus miracle in 1933, when the Virgin Mary supposedly appeared to the little daughter of local white trash, a story that was then passed on from door to door by Sante's pious mother in New Jersey, is worth more than a thousand photographs. It tells you as much about rural Belgium as about an immigrant in America, who feels, in Sante's phrase, permanently unanchored.

What gives Sante's sometimes disjointed manner of storytelling its coherence, and splices the two halves of his book together, is the parallel that he draws between Belgium and his own experience. Both the writer and his native land are culturally and linguistically split. Both have trouble pinning down a centered identity. And both are haunted by a sense of loss. Sante was born in a community whose culture and language have almost vanished. The Walloon language, less a dialect of French than an alternative branch of the Latinate tree, has all but disappeared. There was a brief revival around the turn of the century. Sante tracked down some of the plays and the periodicals that played a part in this revival. He finds a kind of

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Walloon Pompeii. "To come upon the traces of all this ferment is like finding a city buried under volcanic ash, its people frozen while shopping or bathing or giving speeches—an entire self-contained world is on view, but its glories and standards and shibboleths are now completely forgotten."

Now, this phenomenon is not specifically Walloon or Belgian. Europe, and every other place in which modernity acts as an eraser of local differences, is full of forgotten and disappearing cultures. My grandfather still spoke Frisian. How many people still speak Cornish? Some European communities, especially religious communities, have only survived, often in an oddly distorted form, in America. And yet, for Sante, America represents another form of cultural loss. His mother never became American. She took "her village with her to an America she still experiences as utterly foreign." Sante vividly describes the uneasy first steps of immigration, driving around the junk towns of New Jersey, where his father went looking for a job. "All I have to do even now is hear names like Linden, Carteret, Perth Amboy, and my stomach starts to heave as if I were sticking in July sun to the Naugahyde back seat of a '52 Chevrolet with played-out shocks."

In time Sante himself lost his accent, and became an American—up to a point. In some respects, he appears very American. He writes: "The kingdoms and principalities and grand duchies that persist in the present era—Britain not excepted—are inevitably tarred with a comical irrelevance in the eyes of the world." Inevitably? Is that the way most people see Spain, or Japan? A fair number of people in Europe and Asia have political objections to monarchism; but only Americans tend to find it comical. Here and there, Sante's use of American idiom is peculiar. One Belgian gentleman is described as having a "Havana in his kisser." The use of such old-fashioned slang could show a striving to sound American, but if so, it also has the ring of detachment.

Sante's struggle with "identity" might seem to be one of the most American things about him. In the old world, fretting about "Englishness," or "Japaneseness," or *Deutschtum*, or *La France profonde*, tends to be a right-wing preoccupation. In America, digging for roots has a different provenance. It is the reflex of multiculti and minority politics, the problems of the melting pot and so on. By becoming an American, you inevitably lose a lot of cultural baggage. This can be liberating—but also disorienting, and so something of the old country often survives, or gets reinvented, to serve as an anchor in the American landscape. Sante came to America as a child. His cultural baggage, brought along with the other family belongings, was never entirely erased. At first, he "clung" to his "memories for dear life," to preserve some kind of foothold on unfamiliar terrain. "Later, the memories became a way of establishing order in the chaos of my world."

This is perhaps analogous to the fretting of right-wing romantics: the need for order. But there is an element of rebellion in Sante's obsession which is not right-wing at all. The country of his parents represented echoes of a comforting cultural tradition, but also the leaden hand of authority. The old world was governed by strict rules. Belgian good behavior, in the idealized version imposed by his parents, stood in the way of Sante's thirst for American freedom—or at least the freedom to make out with girls in high school. Sifting through the debris of the past, then, becomes an act of homage, nostalgia, and rebellion all at once. This is what gives Sante's book its distinct flavor, and makes it stand out in a genre that has become as commonplace as the travel book was 15 years ago.

Identity politics, in the sense of preserving the culture of a minority, is in any case not Sante's business. His search for roots is not political. The subject of his book is not identity, but memory. His impulse to want to retrieve the past, to smell, and feel, and *see* a lost world is an artistic one. It is what makes him a writer. It is possible that people who have experienced severe cultural dislocation might have a sharper desire to recreate, or indeed to create, lost worlds of their own. But this is not necessarily so. Sante ends his book by stating that "I'm not alone because every one of us is an alien." Well, I suppose so. But this portrait of the artist as a young man is not about every one of us, it is about a weird Belgian in New York who knows how to write.

IAN BURUMA's new book, *Anglomania*, on European views of Britain, will be published next year.

After the End

BY ISTVAN DEAK

Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys by Jeffrey Herf

(Harvard University Press, 527 pp., $29.95)

How did the leaders of postwar Germany deal with the crushing memory of the Holocaust? Did they own up to it? Some did, while others tried to suppress or to marginalize it; but those who triumphed politically were the ones who had dared to face the problem. Gradually, too, the German people have come to grips with their responsibility. This is the fundamental message of Jeffrey Herf's stimulating and original book.

Germany is an ideal place to study the links between the Holocaust and the politics of memory, not only because the Nazis of Germany were the initiators and the chief executors of the satanic plan to kill the Jews, but also because the relevant documents are available—and because the country was divided for 40 years after the war. The French have had to cope with the memory of their shared guilt in collaboration and in the Holocaust within an undivided country. Since every French government has felt responsible for protecting the prestige and the dignity of the entire nation, they have generally preferred to remain silent about the issue. In Germany, by contrast, two separate and mutually hostile regimes worked to turn the memory of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes to their own advantage, while also wielding it as a weapon in the global cold war.

It is one of the great ironies of our time that the Communist regime in East Germany, which claimed to be free of guilt with regard to the genocide of Jews, came to spout anti-Semitic slogans and to act as one of the bitterest enemies of Israel, while West Germany, governed at least on the middle level by former Nazis and quite reluctant to prosecute war criminals, became a genuine friend of Israel and the Jews. Moreover, while East Germany (and Communists everywhere) tried to ignore the memory of the Holocaust, West Germany, which the East Germans regularly described as

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fascistic, led the rest of the world in making restitutions to the Jews, and in inviting a national self-examination.

All of this is persuasively, often brilliantly, demonstrated by Herf (though a shorter book with fewer repetitions would have been just as persuasive). Herf does not propose to write a study of the German public. The people figure in his book mainly as the subjects of occasional opinion polls. Herf's heroes and anti-heroes are, rather, the political elites, especially those wielding the most power in the decade or two after World War II. The list of these notables includes, on the Communist side, Paul Merker, a dedicated Stalinist in the East German Politburo who nevertheless championed restitution to the Jews, thereby inviting his own ruin, as well as such intrepid followers of the ever-twisting Moscow party line as Walter Ulbricht, Wilhelm Pieck, Otto Grotewohl, and Alexander Abusch. On the West German side, the principal characters are Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, Federal President Theodor Heuss, and the Social Democrats Kurt Schumacher and Ernst Reuter.

What bound all these men together, aside from the burden of guilt that they shared with the rest of the German nation, was that none of them ever tried to deny the horrors that had been visited on the Jews and other victims of Nazi rule. Of course, total defeat by the Allied powers, as well as Allied prompting (especially at the Nuremberg trials), helped the German leaders along the road to honesty. Still, with this major concession to truth the consensus of the German leadership came to an end. Subsequently, they disagreed among themselves on such things as whether Nazi crimes had been committed in the name of, or by, the German nation; whether the capitalists and the landowners of Germany, or the Nazi rabble, were to blame; whether only a small group of criminals or many Germans were involved in the killings (and who among the Germans ought to be punished); and whether, and at what price, the forgiveness of Jewry ought to be sought.

How fortunate is Herf's generation of historians! Earlier specialists who wished to learn about political decision-making in East Germany had to be satisfied with interviewing disgruntled refugees from the Communist leadership and reading excruciatingly dull speeches by Communist bosses, as well as the even more exasperating articles in East German newspapers and journals. But now archival documents are widely available in the unified Germany, more so than in most other democratic countries. Herf has made full use of them. His main sources are the state archives in West and East Germany, the Stasi police files as well as the secret and top-secret notes, diaries, and letters of the political elite. Other historians, though they might want to interpret those documents somewhat differently, will probably not find many more sources than those Herf has uncovered.

Herf's dramatis personae were all born in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which means that they had recollections of the old Empire and especially of World War I. None ever belonged to the Nazi party. Quite the contrary. As Herf explains, they brought into the post-Nazi era the memory of their sufferings, or at least of their unpleasant personal experiences, under Nazi rule. They also brought with them their political and intellectual baggage from the pre-Hitler years.

The Communists looked back to the struggles in the late Weimar republic when, at Stalin's orders, they branded the Social Democrats as "social fascists," or greater enemies of the proletariat than Hitler and the Nazis. In Communist analysis, Hitler was only a tool of monopoly capital in its final, dictatorial, terroristic, and imperialist phase; but the Social Democrats were really dangerous, because they deliberately misled the proletariat in order to delay the inevitable collapse of the decrepit capitalist system. Even after the SA and the Gestapo had smashed the German Communist Party, and masses of Party members had joined the Nazis, and thousands of Communist functionaries were in exile or in concentration camps, the Party leadership confidently expected the revolt of the German workers and the victory of Communism.

In 1935, to be sure, Stalin reversed the suicidal ultraleftist policy announced in 1928 at the Sixth Comintern Congress in Moscow. He now encouraged the formation of antifascist Popular Fronts, into which even the Social Democrats were admitted. But Walter Ulbricht and his ilk were never enthusiastic about this volte-face, though they obeyed Moscow's orders, of course. After World War II, the Communist leadership needed little inspiration to rekindle their hatred of the Social Democrats, or at least of those Social Democrats who would not submit to Communist dictates. But the Communists also carried with them the memory of World War II, when German workers in field gray uniform casually massacred masses of Soviet men and women. Since it was impossible to reconcile these conflicting memories, most Communists chose not to think at all. Instead, they parroted the Party line. This changed from a bitter condemnation of the German people to their gradual exculpation, and from regret about the fate of the Jews as well as support for the creation of Israel to denunciation of Israel and many Jews as cosmopolitan, capitalist enemies.

And the intellectual baggage that the new West German leaders brought with them to the postwar world, as Herf indicates, was no less complex. Such conservatives as Adenauer suffered only relatively minor indignities under the Nazis; but he and others were disgusted by the nihilism, the terror, the racism, the vulgarity, and the extreme nationalism of the National Socialists. In fact, the intellectual and moral chasm separating Adenauer and the Nazis was far wider than the chasm separating Ulbricht and the Nazis. Other West Germans, such as the liberal Theodor Heuss, abhorred the ruthlessness and the anti-Semitism of the Nazis; yet he could not but remember that he himself, as well as his party, had voted in parliament on March 1, 1933 to give dictatorial powers to Adolf Hitler.

As for the Social Democrats, they alone among the deputies in the Reichstag on that day (the Communist Party had already been outlawed) did not vote to make Hitler dictator. Many Social Democrats, their postwar leader Kurt Schumacher included, went through hell in Nazi concentration camps. Yet Schumacher also brought with him the memory of the frustrating late Weimar days, when he and a few other militant Social Democrats advocated the creation of a common national front against the Nazis, only to see themselves rebuffed by the bourgeois parties, most Social Democrats, the trade unions, and the Communists. Of course, the Social Democrats also brought with them their prewar vision of a state-owned economy and a Marxist society. Only in 1959, at the Godesberg conference, did the Social Democratic Party abandon this dream.

All in all, as Herf points out, the postwar leadership of both Germanys, while confronting an entirely new situation, displayed elements of continuity. Herf investigates the two Germanys systematically, in separate chapters. Though developments in West Germany in the late 1940s and the 1950s held the key to what German-Jewish relations are today, the disastrous developments taking place in the Soviet Zone at that time are even more interesting, in part because we used to know so little about them.

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Theoretically, as Herf insists, there should have been common ground in the post-World War II era between Jewish victims and Communist victims. Jewish survivors naturally belonged to the KPD, the German Communist Party. After all, the Soviet Union supported the creation of Israel; the Red Army had played a crucial role in the defeat of Hitler; and democratic institutions seemed very dangerous in German hands. At first, it looked as if such common ground could be achieved. Denying their traditional belief that only a small coterie of landowners and capitalists and their Social Democratic stooges were responsible for Germany's ills, the Communist exiles in Moscow recognized that many other Germans shared the guilt. The Party's first manifesto, of June 13, 1945, spoke of "millions and millions" who had supported the fascist criminals.

Even later, during what Herf calls "the Nuremberg interregnum" of 1945–1946, when the International Military Tribunal sat in judgment on the major German war criminals, the Communists were still driven by ambivalences. On the one hand, they advocated the expropriation of the landowners and the capitalists, a move judged sufficient to eliminate the roots of fascism; on the other hand, Ulbricht, Pieck, and the others distrusted the German people to the point of arguing that what the Germans needed was dictatorial rule. (No matter what the situation, of course, the Communists would still have wanted to set up a dictatorship.) More ominously, the KPD attributed its limited prewar popular appeal to insufficient nationalism, which meant that sooner or later the Party would begin to operate with slogans not very dissimilar from those once used by the Nazis and the nationalists. Needless to say, the Communists also insisted on their exclusive right to interpret the past.

Actually, it took some time for a monolithic Communist point of view to be established, given the existence, alongside the so-called Muscovites and former Nazi concentration camp inmates, of another significant group of Communists, those who had survived the war in Mexican exile. Suspicious of, and sometimes excluded from, the United States, German Communist refugees had gone to Mexico, where they were embraced by leftist comrades from the Spanish Civil War. Subjected to Western propaganda and cultural influences, and mostly Jewish, the Mexican exiles tended to see things differently from the Moscow contingent. Perhaps Herf should have emphasized that the Muscovites did not really have an opinion of their own. After all, they, too, were survivors, not of Nazi but of Soviet terror. Those who had escaped arrest by the NKVD were a thoroughly intimidated lot who, while not losing their mind-boggling admiration for Stalin and the Soviet Union, knew just how lucky they were to be alive.

The Mexico group was different, especially Paul Merker, a non-Jew with a Jewish wife. Merker was an old-time Communist, an ultraleftist, and the only member of the KPD Politburo not in Moscow or in a German prison. Between 1931 and 1933, Merker had operated in the United States as a secret Comintern agent. Later Moscow sent him back to Berlin, and then to Paris, from where he fled to Casablanca, in 1940, with the help of the American Quaker Noel Field, who was a dedicated Communist and a Soviet agent. Traveling through New York, Merker arrived in Mexico City in 1942 where, in the words of Herf, he "joined other German Communist émigrés to bring the issue of Jewish suffering from the periphery to the center of the narratives of Communist antifascism for the first—and only—time in its history."

Merker has the sympathy of Herf. He had, clearly, an attractive personality. But Herf should have made more of Merker's Jewish wife, to show that his favoring of Jewish causes was not altogether altruistic. In any case, in Mexico, and back in Berlin after 1946, Merker argued in favor of *Wiedergutmachung* or restitution, and stated repeatedly that the Communists shared in the responsibility for the German tragedy. Late in 1948, however, when Stalin dropped his pro-Israel policy and veered over to the Arab side, Merker's days in the KPD Politburo were numbered. Abandoned, and in fact betrayed, by his friend Alexander Abusch, another "Mexican" and a Jew, Merker was pushed out of the Politburo in 1950. Two years earlier, Merker had written the introduction to the Communist Party's statement concerning Israel. It expressed full support for the "progressive struggle of the Jewish workers in Palestine" and insisted that this struggle was "supported by the Soviet Union and by all of progressive humanity." By 1950, however, East Germany was already branding Israel and world Jewry as enemies of the Arab workers and as agents of American imperialism.

At the time of the Korean War, the East German media compared American policy in Europe and Korea to Hitler's aggression. The spokesman of

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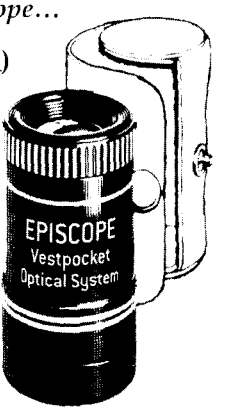

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the new nationalist campaign was the Jewish Communist Albert Norden, who identified Israel and the United States with capitalism in terms that were nearly verbatim repetitions of Nazi propaganda. East German monuments dedicated to "The Victims of War and Fascism" did not mention the Jews, and attacked the United States as the enemy of peace and the wartime destroyer of German cities. During the East German campaign against "cosmopolitanism," 150,000 former Social Democrats were expelled from the SED, the unified Socialist Party under Communist control. As for the small Jewish community in East Germany, a large part of it fled to the West, together with 2.6 million other East Germans, before the erection of the Wall in 1961.

Paul Merker was arrested in December 1952. At his hearings, the political police attempted to link him to Noel Field, then in prison in Hungary, who served as a government witness against the Communist defendants at the Stalinist show trials in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. But Merker refused to confess to imaginary crimes, and for some reason East Germany never mounted the sort of show trials that were characteristic of the period. Sentenced to eight years in a secret trial held in 1955, as "an agent of Jewish capitalists," Merker was released in January 1956, but he never again held an important political office.

Despite Herf's enthusiasm for Merker, his tragedy must be judged a minor episode in the history of the German Democratic Republic. There was never a chance that the Communists would shoulder moral and fiscal responsibility for the Holocaust; this was forbidden by Moscow's dictates and by Communist ideology, which held that the Jews were not a nation, and that the issue of anti-Semitism had no autonomous political significance.

While the East German Communists were engaged in their inhuman and ultimately suicidal policies, the West Germans were going through the birth pangs of democracy. Many things did not turn out well in the Western zones, either. As Herf and other historians have demonstrated, Germans after World War II tended to feel so sorry for themselves—as victims of the war, of the bombings, of rape by Soviet soldiers, of the massacre and expulsion of millions of Germans in Eastern Europe, of hunger, even of Nazism—as to ignore the sufferings of others. At best, they felt that Jews and Germans were equally victims. The German people generally approved of the Nuremberg trials of the major war criminals, if for no other reason than because they seemed to exculpate the other Germans. All the greater was the popular resentment when German courts attempted to continue where the International Court had left off. Those in the West utterly disliked the Allied effort, and especially the massive American effort, at denazification, in which hundreds of thousands were interned or lost their jobs. True, after a year or two of arduous investigation, there still remained a huge number of unfinished cases—but there were, in 1945, eight million Nazi Party members.

Interestingly, the West Germans did not resist the Allied attempt at democratization. Quite the contrary. Sensing that this was to be their future, they became superb disciples. The German statesman who best showed the way in this direction was Adenauer, whom Herf admires, though he seems to like him less than Paul Merker or Kurt Schumacher. The oldest of the great postwar leaders, Adenauer had been mayor of Cologne as far back as 1917. He opposed the Nazis and suffered many indignities at their hands. He emerged from the war firmly intent on fundamentally changing Germany and its people. Adenauer was, I think, modern Germany's greatest revolutionary.

This Catholic Rhineland conservative, as Herf explains, despised the Prussian celebration of the authoritarian state, and Herder's and Hegel's ranking of the nation and the state above the individual. He abhorred German idealism and romanticism. Seeing both Communists and Nazis as nihilists and materialists, Adenauer hoped to re-Christianize Germany. As Chancellor between 1949 and 1963, he helped turn West Germany into a liberal parliamentary system no different from, say, the Netherlands. He helped to bring about Franco-German reconciliation, fostered European integration, and made Germany—the quintessential mid-European power—a part of the Atlantic community. While the East Germans were experiencing their second terroristic and militaristic dictatorship, the West Germans successfully developed democratic institutions.

The drawbacks of the Adenauer revolution were not insignificant, but in the long run they could be overcome. Convinced that democratization and justice could not go together, and that the German people would accept the former but not the latter, Adenauer relentlessly strove for an end to denazification and for the freeing of war criminals. In this, he was eminently successful. By the late 1950s, there was hardly a Nazi criminal still in prison.

It is one of the greatest ironies of our time that political purges and judicial retributions were more severe in the countries once occupied by, or allied to, the Third Reich than in Germany itself. In Norway or in Hungary, a murderer of Jews or even just a Nazi sympathizer was much more likely to be punished after the war than in either of the two Germanys. Curiously, the situation regarding Nazi crimes was not very different in East Germany from the situation in the Western zones. Herf's statistical data show that the rate of release of war criminals was about the same in both Germanys. He goes so far as to state that "despite its antifascist legitimations, the German Democratic Republic was, if anything, even less aggressive in prosecuting crimes of the Nazi era than was the Federal Republic."

It is true that East German prisons and a few former Nazi concentration camps remained chock full of inmates, though these were not Nazis but mainly members of the former social elite. Still, it is also true that the proportion of former Nazi party members in the East German administration was much smaller than in the West. Hans Globke, the head of the Federal Chancellery under Adenauer and once an important Nazi functionary, was only one among the thousands of National Socialist bureaucrats, judges, university professors, generals, and medical doctors, some of them guilty of the vilest crimes, who continued to advance their careers in West Germany. While West Germany denied assistance to the widows and the children of those executed for desertion from the Wehrmacht during the war, it awarded even the most notorious SS commander his pension as a "police general." (Herf makes clear, incidentally, that the effect of the cold war on the release and the rehabilitation of Nazi war criminals in either of the two Germanys was not as crucial as is commonly assumed.)

Many West German statesmen rejected Adenauer's two-faced policy. Theodor Heuss demanded a more steadfast moral stand against the Nazi crimes, and Kurt Schumacher raged at the sight of his former tormentors occupying important positions. But the influence of Heuss and Schumacher on the course of events was limited. Caught between his unconditional anti-Communism, his Marxist economics, his resentment of American capitalism and imperialism, and his strong patriotism, Schumacher cut a heroic but anachronistic figure. He died in 1952, in part as a consequence of

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his wartime miseries in the Dachau concentration camp. What the Social Democrats of the early postwar years did best was to educate the German workers and to cultivate good relations with Western Social Democrats, as well as with Jewish labor circles. Adenauer realized that, whereas the German people had no wish to see justice done, they were quite willing to make amends and to pay restitution to the Jews. The result was the consistently pro-Israeli policy of the West German regime, and a total of 110 billion German marks paid out to the survivors.

Herf's excellent book concludes with a reflection on memory and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the attempt to overcome the past, since the 1960s. He makes it clear that the 1960s provoked genuine soul-searching among younger Germans. Add to this the crucial role of Chancellor Willy Brandt between 1969 and 1974, symbolized by his visit to Warsaw, where he went down to his knees at the memorials for Jews killed in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1943, and for Poles killed in the great Warsaw Uprising in 1944. While the Americans, Adenauer, and many others taught the German people how to live and act as democrats, the younger generation of Germans are teaching themselves and their older compatriots how to look back at the past, not with rose-tinted glasses, but with the awareness that during the war millions of Germans, together with millions of other Europeans, committed abominable and unpardonable crimes. In the final analysis, then, this is an encouraging story.

ISTVAN DEAK is Seth Low Professor of History at Columbia University.

A Man of Honor

BY ERIC BREINDEL

Anything Your Little Heart Desires: An American Family Story by Patricia Bosworth

(Simon & Schuster, 416 pp., $27.50)

This poignant, painful book is Patricia Bosworth's interesting effort to come to terms with the life of her father. Bartley C. Crum was a handsome and flamboyant man, a successful lawyer, who took his own life in 1959, a decade after moving from San Francisco to New York and some six years after his only son (Bosworth's brother) committed suicide. He dashed across the political stage in midcentury America like a fleeting comet.

Early on, Crum managed to represent some of California's largest and most conservative companies, even while litigating on behalf of the Australian-born West Coast labor leader Harry Bridges. The latter was charged with concealing his Communist Party membership and violating the terms of his U.S. visa, and was long the target of a federal deportation effort. Again and again in the late 1930s, Crum used his skills to prevent the charismatic union chief's deportation. (During this period, Bridges consistently denied any affiliation with the Party. Documents unearthed recently in Moscow's Comintern archive prove just the opposite, and more: Bridges was not a mere rank-and-filer, he was a member of the CPUSA's Central Committee.)

A liberal Republican, Crum went on to help manage Wendell Willkie's unsuccessful bid for the White House in 1940. All along, though, the swashbuckling attorney nurtured his ties to leading Democrats. Thus, after the war, and following the untimely death of Willkie (Crum's abiding hero) in 1944, President Truman—recognizing the San Franciscan as an ardent champion of the Zionist cause—appointed him to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into Palestine. The Committee represented a final attempt to forge a settlement in Mandatory Palestine. Not surprisingly, Crum—especially after he and his colleagues visited with Holocaust survivors in Germany's "Displaced Persons" camps—emerged as the leading advocate for the Zionist claim within the Committee. In the end, of course, this London-conceived endeavor came to nought.

Shortly thereafter, Crum made a brief foray into newspaper publishing. In a desperate attempt to salvage a version of New York's liberal-left daily *P.M.*—a failing journalistic experiment whose mission turned on insuring editorial integrity by rejecting paid advertisements—Crum helped to create *The New York Star*, a short-lived successor to *P.M.* From the outset, however, the *Star* was dominated by Communists and fellow-travelers, by the hard-left element in what had been *P.M.*'s fragile coalition.

The new paper's tendentious rendition of the news doomed it from the start, by alienating its decidedly sophisticated readership. (Many *P.M.* anti-communists, among them James Wechsler and Max Lerner, found a home at the then-liberal *New York Post*.) During this period, moreover, Crum began to recognize the perils inherent in making alliances with Communists. In the end—his eyes opened to his own past naïveté—Crum insisted that the *Star* endorse Harry Truman over Henry Wallace in 1948, thereby aggravating internal disharmony and accelerating the paper's eventual demise. (Wallace, of course, was the unofficial C.P. candidate.)

Abandoning his career as a newspaper executive, Crum (who had decided to remain in New York) developed an East Coast legal practice that included a role he had come increasingly to enjoy: lawyer to the stars. He began to make headlines—and to appear in gossip columns—on a regular basis, especially while serving as Rita Hayworth's lawyer (and confidante) in her multi-million-dollar divorce action against Prince Aly Khan. By this point, sadly, Crum was severely disabled by an addiction to alcohol and barbiturates—the lethal cocktail with which he eventually took his life.

Meanwhile, his longstanding affiliation with the Communist-dominated National Lawyers Guild—and his decision in 1947 to join Party attorneys in representing the "Hollywood Ten" before HUAC—brought down upon him the unwelcome scrutiny of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI. Crum was a genuine idealist, but he wasn't averse to living the good life. And ever since his efforts on behalf of Harry Bridges, he had refused to conceal his Popular Front sympathies. The onset of the cold war saw a national decline in tolerance for the casual approach to political alliances that defined the activities of well-meaning liberals; and eventually even Crum's Washington connections were not sufficient to enable him to ride out the new climate. His income fell drastically during the McCarthy years, and he proved incapable of restraining his lavish habits.

Patricia Bosworth loved and admired

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her father. Her memoir's very title reflects the enviable confidence of a child about her father's devotion. Eventually, as this book sadly relates, the daughter became a quasi-nursemaid to the father; and even during her teenage years, Bosworth recalls, she would look in on her father at night in order to make sure that he hadn't nodded off with a lit cigarette. (Her parents had long since abandoned conjugal intimacy; and while the Crums never divorced, their separate romantic lives were an unhappy fact of family life.)

Bosworth has produced a sensitive and graceful portrait of a vigorous and extremely talented man who lived his life in increasing psychic torment. But her book, inevitably, is also a political document, a study of an American liberal who—as Bosworth herself wrote in an essay in *The New York Times* in 1992—was destroyed, at least in part, by HUAC and the "blacklist." Interestingly, Bosworth notes here that when her *Times* piece was published, she was already familiar with a fact that had been kept from her during her father's life and in the first two decades after his death. She had learned that during the 1950s, a desperate Bartley Crum afforded the FBI a measure of cooperation.

Bosworth came to this knowledge involuntarily. It was visited upon her 20 years ago when a "friend" of her father decided that it was time for her to face up to a painful truth: the man whom she had worshipped, Bosworth was told, had been an "informer." And it seems that Crum did provide the Bureau with information about the National Lawyers Guild. He also identified two colleagues from the "Hollywood Ten" legal team (Ben Margolis and Martin Popper) as having been Party members.

Bosworth struggled with this revelation. Those were the years when Lillian Hellman's *Scoundrel Time* was being read as history rather than as fiction. That is, Bosworth was hit by this news just as the "revisionist" view of the cold war years had begun to take on the aspect of received wisdom. And so her initial sense of shame is not surprising. Happily, she has managed to transcend it, for the sake of the truth. Bosworth now recognizes that her father deliberately refrained from telling the FBI anything it didn't already know. (The political affiliations of Popper and Margolis were not a closely guarded secret.) Bosworth also emphasizes that Crum never liked "being taken for a sucker"; and she implies that he came to see the manner in which he and other non-Communists had been used by the Party in this light.

Still, Bosworth cannot accept the notion that ideological conviction was the key factor in her father's decision to cooperate with the FBI. As she sees it, he was a weak man who—behind a courageous façade—was deeply frightened by the implications of J. Edgar Hoover's hostility. Bosworth may well be right about Crum's primary motive: his plaintive letters to Hoover, the unlikely alliances that he began to strike with far-right anti-Communists, and his obsession with ensuring the removal of his name from the FBI's "Security Index" all tend to support her interpretation.

Yet there remains Crum's realization that in joining the Guild, the Progressive Citizens of America, the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, and virtually every other Communist front under the sun, he had allowed the Party to transform him into the sort of liberal that Lenin liked to describe as a "useful idiot." Such an awakening must have been a sobering experience. After all, Crum had taken at face value claims by the leaders of these organizations that the groups in question were not Party-controlled. Indeed, he appears to have accepted the Party's standard claim that its members were merely "liberals in a hurry." After the Party endeavored to justify the Communist coup in Prague in 1948, and sought to ignore increasing evidence of Soviet espionage in America, and tried to blame Washington for the onset of hostilities in Korea, many once-sympathetic liberals finally came to recognize the Party's true nature. In feeling that he had been duped, Bartley Crum was far from alone.

Bosworth never discussed his FBI decision with her father. Nor did she explore with him the larger question of his evolving view of the Communist enterprise in America. These gaps are unfortunate, despite the more-in-sorrow-than-in-anger tone that informs her book, despite Bosworth's manifest sympathy for her father's predicament. This is especially true in view of the fact that she is not fully familiar with recent historical revelations. Thus, in discussing Joe Barnes, the editor of the *Star* (and a former foreign editor of the *Herald Tribune*), Bosworth implies that his political orientation mirrored that of her father; but newly released documents demonstrate that Barnes was secretly a Party member. Unaware of this finding, Bosworth fails even to consider the possibility that her father may himself have recognized Barnes's duplicity—Barnes had represented himself as a liberal—during the year in which the two men worked together.

Similarly, Bosworth seems not to have availed herself of the opportunity to read Edward Dmytryk's *Odd Man Out*, the memoir of the renowned film director that was published last year. A member of the "Hollywood Ten," Dmytryk personally had retained Crum as his lawyer. Unlike all but one other "unfriendly" witness, Dmytryk had already left the Party by the time he was subpoenaed by HUAC. Only after serving out a prison term, however, did Dmytryk decide that, by posing with Stalinists as a defender of the Bill of Rights, he had been complicit in a terrible hoax.

Dmytryk knew full well that the Party had no use for the "bourgeois rights" invoked by his fellow witnesses in their effort to evade HUAC's questions. He also reports that Popper and Margolis had developed a legal strategy designed primarily to advance the interests of the Party, not the interests of their ostensible clients. Indeed, the man who would later direct *The Caine Mutiny* claims that he and Crum were excluded from important deliberations as a consequence of their (non-Communist) political status. According to Dmytryk, both he and his attorney came to a decidedly negative view of the Party in the course of this episode.

Finally, recent evidence demonstrating that Harry Bridges lied about his political ties to her father and to the rest of the country also seems to have escaped Bosworth's notice. To be sure, it is not likely that Crum himself ever learned the truth about Bridges. But had the relevant information come to Crum's attention, he would likely have viewed the episode as yet one more case in which the Communist Party took advantage of his sympathetic disposition and played him for a fool.

Patricia Bosworth's portrait of her father is a book divided against itself. A part of her wants to depict him as an ordinary McCarthy-era victim. But Bosworth knows too much to see this period in Manichean terms. She recognizes that Crum's passion for justice was attended by a certain political naïveté; and she realizes that he had no use for duplicity, unlike those with whom he often allied himself. Finally an undercurrent of admiration runs through the book. This is as it should be. For all his missteps, Bartley Crum was a man of honor, and his daughter has good reason to be proud of him.

ERIC BREINDEL, who died on March 7, was a syndicated columnist and a senior vice-president of the News Corporation.

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TRB *continued from page 6*

But even this difficult challenge is hardly apocalyptic. During the last three decades or so, the U.S. has absorbed millions of non-English-speaking, non-white, non-Christian immigrants, with considerable discomfort in some quarters, but nothing close to a national crisis. Even if Puerto Rico does become "another Quebec," would that be so terrible? Despite the perennial English-French quarrel, Canada has stayed together as one of the freest and most prosperous nations on earth. And it has done so without a unifying ideology as powerful and flexible as America's.

It all depends on *how* we go about adding Puerto Rico to the union. Statehood could go sour only if its advocates allow the more extreme forms of modern multiculturalism to define the terms of the island's accession—i.e., if statehood is treated as an opportunity to enshrine group rights as opposed to individual ones. If, on the other hand, the statehood legislation is written to provide for a reasonable degree of linguistic accommodation by Puerto Ricans—widespread English instruction in the schools, the use of English for government business on the island—and if Puerto Ricans know, in advance, that this is what they will be voting for, then there should be little danger that Puerto Rican statehood will become the opening act of America's balkanization, much less of its conversion into a *republica latina*.

For mainland Americans, Puerto Rican statehood would pose a unique and difficult, but potentially rewarding, test of the culturally transcendent capacity of America's democratic creed. Properly managed, the experiment would carry relatively little downside risk. Indeed, the real threat statehood poses is to the indigenous culture of Puerto Rico, which was, after all, settled a century before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock. As the last century's history of association between island and mainland has shown, cultural influence runs in both directions, but the power of American popular culture dwarfs that of traditional Latin culture. Over the years, the salsa-dancing mainland has become a little bit more Latin, but Puerto Rico has become a lot more "American." Pro-statehood sentiment has been steadily growing, as measured by the nonbinding plebiscites periodically taken on the island. If the island's inhabitants vote to give up a little bit more of their cultural sovereignty in return for the blessings of full membership in the American political community, there's little reason to turn them away.

CHARLES LANE

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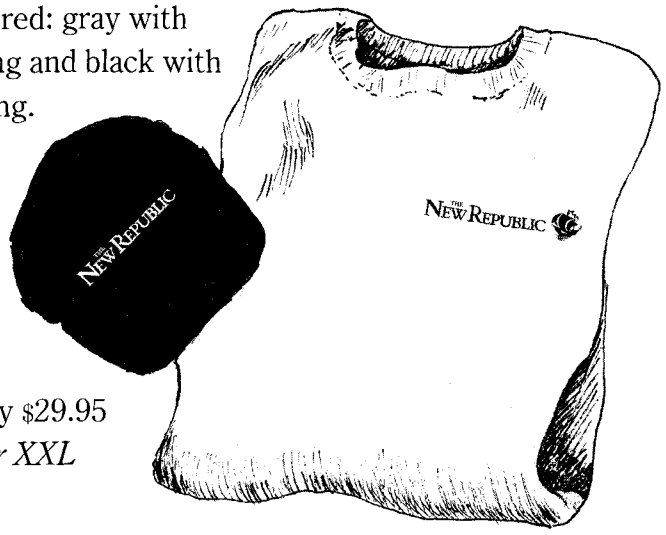

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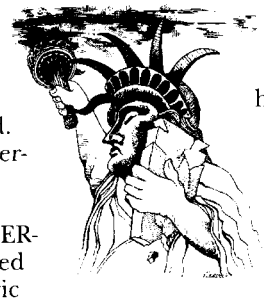
NEW YORK DIARIST

Early sorrow

ERIC BREINDEL HAD AN ALLERGY to the pieties of public life, because they forced our politics to pretend that the world was a better place than it is. This conviction was never attended by bitterness. Anyway, the prospect of a long life ending in disenchantment was denied him. He died last week at the age of 42. Eric's entire career as a writer and as an editor, and as a counselor to men and women in high places, was devoted to the refinement of this skeptical idea. I do not call it a pessimistic idea: Eric believed in good societies, and he was certain that such societies, properly protected and nurtured, would bring good lives to their citizens. But that required that they not be deluged and deluded by the rhetoric of grand transformation and justifiable murder that was essential to every evil movement in this evil century.

I MET ERIC NEARLY 25 YEARS AGO, when he was a student at Harvard. He had written a dissent to an editorial in *The Harvard Crimson* which, as I remember, chastised Israel for a morally ambiguous act that seemed to have been premised on the assumption that the Jewish state lived among neighbors who did not wish it well. Perhaps Israel's predicament—aspiring to be a modern Athens yet forced to be also a modern Sparta—sharpened Eric's sense that ideals could not survive unless they were buttressed against harsh realities. In any case, he loved the people of Israel, and he understood that, without a state, that dispersed people would exist precariously forever. He was a child of Holocaust refugees, and so history meant more to him than simply the past. His knowledge of history also warned him (and us) about the future in ways that intellectuals on the sunny side of the street find tiresome. Some thought Eric obsessive and fierce; he was. But obsession is another word for passion, and fierceness may simply mean that you are unafraid to fight. He sometimes seemed to have wished that he had been born earlier so that he could have fought in the insurrection of the Warsaw Ghetto and in the battles for Jewish Palestine.

ERIC WAS EDITOR OF THE *NEW YORK Daily News* editorial pages and then of the same pages at the *New York Post*. It was there that he initiated his weekly column, which he wrote even when he moved to the corporate end of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation and moderated the most free-spirited talk show on television. The show demonstrated not only the vitality of Eric's convictions but also his belief that others, powerful or marginal, liberal or conservative or radical, should have their say. Already in his early thirties, he had a pivotal place among the opinion elites. He came by this not through inheritance or acquisition but rather by dint of his intellectual gifts: a deeply analytical intelligence, a writing style at once elegant and muscular, a mind filled with scholarly associations, a feeling for the lives of ordinary people. At the funeral in the Park Avenue Synagogue, the humble sat near the mighty, bidding farewell to their champion and friend. Eric was the least alienated person I have ever known.



JUDAH NADICH, RABBI EMERitus at the synagogue, recalled at the service that, when Eric was very young, even before his bar mitzvah, he made a presentation to his Hebrew school class about the first-century Jewish historian and traitor Josephus Flavius. (Going to Hebrew school did not prevent the young Hebraist from becoming a deft wrestler and a champion tennis player.) The rabbi didn't say so, but I'm sure that what made Eric kindle to the story of Josephus was the subject of loyalty. It was, supremely, Eric's subject. His life was a short saga of loyalties, to friends, to family, to the women who were deeply in his life, and to his people and his country.

ERIC ONCE MADE A STARTLING assertion: Virtually every American who was ever formally accused of concretely serving the interests of the Soviet Union was actually guilty as charged. At his death, he was writing a book to prove this assertion. In this effort, he was challenging the sentimental lie which now prevails in liberal circles that those so accused were actually good-hearted men and women naïvely innocent of the cynicism with which communists enlisted them in the "progressive" causes of the prewar and postwar worlds. My own view is that, at best, a certain blithe lightheadedness at being in tandem with history (or History) persuaded such folk to look away from the cruelties perpetrated in its behalf; but Eric's view was more severe. No controversy in recent American history goes to the core of the present liberal paralysis as cuttingly as this. In pursuing this project, Eric brought on his head an immense controversy. It brings only honor to his memory.

ABOUT HONOR: ERIC, WHOSE newspaper home was the tabloids, was utterly uninterested in gossip. He used his pages and his columns to educate and to argue. He wanted to keep alive the tradition of the old liberal *Post*, where Max Lerner and James Wechsler stretched their readers with genuine reflection. Eric respected his readers, and he respected his students. He and I twice cotaught a course on ideology at Harvard. He had the talents of a natural teacher, provoking his students' questions, evoking their answers. Already then he had something of a reputation as a neoconservative, but he had what Henry James called "a liberal heart"; and this liberal heart—which was not a bleeding heart—invited as much challenge from students as from any other teacher I've ever encountered. Some years earlier, Eric had been my student. The rabbis tell us that a man's teacher is like a man's father. I was not his father, though for years—and with the ready assent of my children (and children are the most strenuous judges of character)—he was almost a son. And, not at all paradoxically, he was also, in many ways, my teacher.

SENATORS, MAYORS, A GOVERNOR, and a former secretary of state spoke at the funeral, and I know that they cherished him in their ways. Dear friends and family, women and men who palpably loved him, also spoke, and then formed a procession of grievers after the *El Maleh Rachamim*, the wrenching prayer for the soul of the dead. Then some of us, Eric's closest, rode out to the graveyard in New Jersey to bury him. His father, frail from illness and sorrow, intoned the crushing words of the Kaddish, *yiskadal v'yiskadash*.... And then he was buried. Jews do not leave the work of covering the casket to the groundskeepers. Each of us took turns with the shovels: his mother and father, his sister, his nieces, Tommy, Bobby, Lally, Katherine, Pammy, Nancy, Susan, Jesse, Anne, Neal, Richard, Robie, Leon, me. And then with the hole still only half-filled by the gritty earth, Seth, his oldest friend, and Jonathan, his brother-in-law, with a determination that seemed a mixture of love and sanctity and rage, shoveled and shoveled until the soil met the surrounding grass. Eric was now protected forever. And may we say amen.

MARTIN PERETZ

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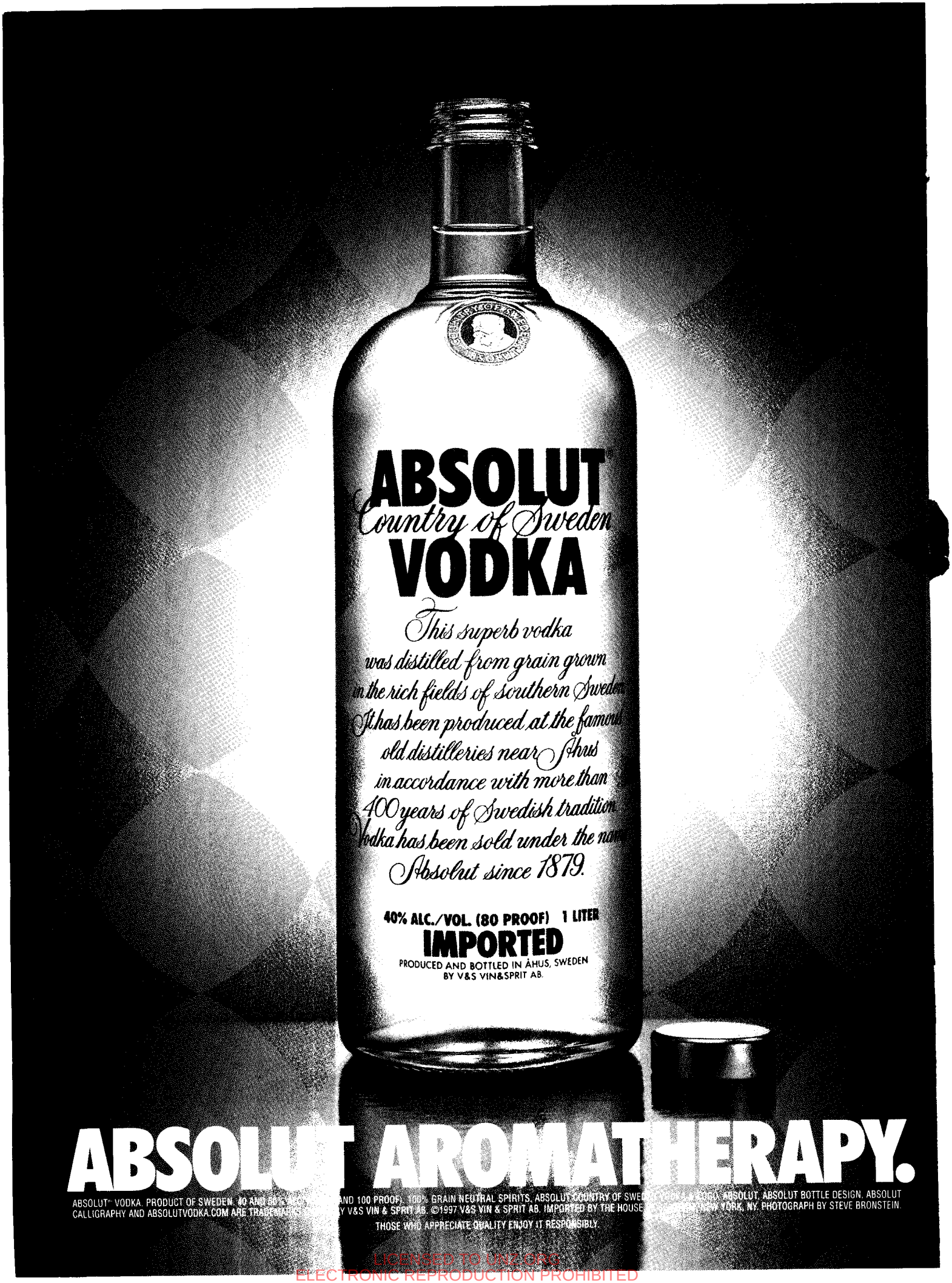
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